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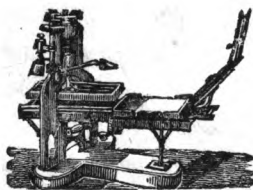
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HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF
MONT SAINT-MICHEL
AND
MONT TOMBELÈNE,

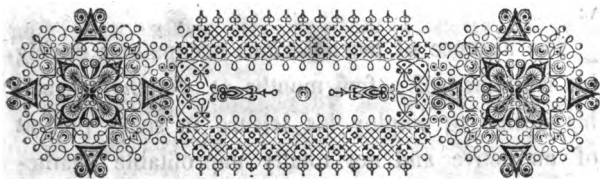
BY
James Hairby, M. D.
etc., etc.



Avranches,

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1841.



PREFACE.



THE writer of the following pages lays no claim to originality of thought or novelty of expression. His object merely is to present to the English reader, in a succinct form, what the voluminous works of the French historians of *Mont Saint-Michel* have copiously furnished.

The absence of more serious occupations during his residence of a few months at *Avranches*, and his desire to employ his leisure in some pursuit of an active and not totally unprofitable character, have induced him to search the records of a place, which may be truly termed one of the wonders of nature and art.

He has minutely scrutinized those records, and — without appropriating to himself more than has originated in his own mind during his investigation, — has scrupulously referred either directly in the text, or indirectly through the notes, to the various authorities whence he has deduced the details, which he has endeavoured to present in a regular and connected form, disentangled from the tediousness of narration in which the original authors have indulged.

Some notion of the historical importance of the abbey of *Mont Saint-Michel* may be obtained, from the fact that there are more than a thousand charters relating to it, which have not yet been *accurately* examined.

What a field for investigation is here open to the zealous archeologist!

The most valuable works — not manuscripts — respecting *Mont Saint-Michel* are :

1° That of *M. Blondel*, — the pioneer to all succeeding ones ;

2° The excellent History of *Maximilien Raoul*, which has been the compiler's principal guide,

and from which *M. Boudent-Godelinière* has most freely drawn;

3° A Work published by *M. l'abbé Manet*;

4° The History of *Mont Saint-Michel*, by *M. l'abbé Desroches*, in 2 vol. in-8°, whose accuracy of quotation from various MSS. in the library at *Avranches*, is extreme.

With few and obvious exceptions, the historical sketch, presented in the following pages, has been chronologically arranged, and the description of every thing within the walls of the abbey has been ascertained by the author's personal observation, excepting some of the remarks on the caves, which have been given on the authority of *Maximilien Raoul*, who was familiarly acquainted with them.

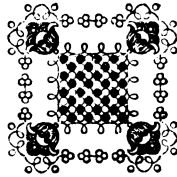
In an appendix will be found an accurate transcript of the catalogue of the MSS. in the library at *Avranches*, — a document which the author considers of no little importance to the antiquarian.

It remains only for him to add that, in referring to the MSS. in that library, he has designated them only by their general numerical arrangement, because, though the names of the writers are in some instances prefixed or endorsed, their omission is more frequent.

The author — in conclusion — feels it a duty to offer his best thanks to *M. Alex. Motet*, the

VIII

librarian at *Avranches*, whose urbanity of manner and untiring assiduity in searching for *MSS.*, and, when necessary, decyphering their contents for him, are so deserving of this acknowledgment.



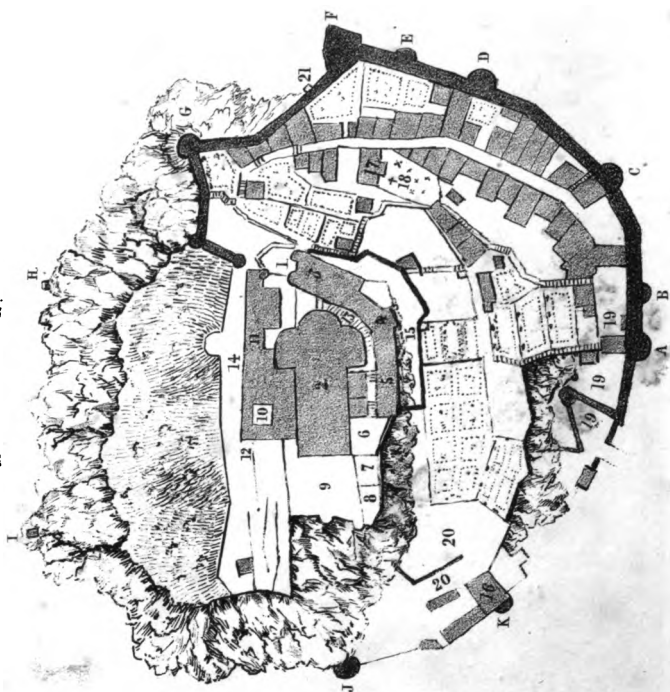
MONT ST MICHEL.

LEGENDE.

1. Porte d'Entrée.
2. Eglise.
3. Corps de garde et logement des gardiens.
4. Quartier des condamnés politique.
5. Logement du Directeur.
6. Saint Gallien.
7. Infirmerie.
8. Hôtellerie en ruines.
9. Plate forme (Péan).
10. Cour de plomb. (Cloître)
11. Ateliers et Dortoirs.
12. Montgomerie.
13. Grand cachot.
14. Mur de ronde de la merveille.
15. Mur de ronds.
16. Caserne. (Panniers)
17. Eglise de la ville.
18. Cimetière de la ville.
19. Porte d'Entrée de la ville.
20. Rampe conduisant au Chateau.
21. Petite fontaine.

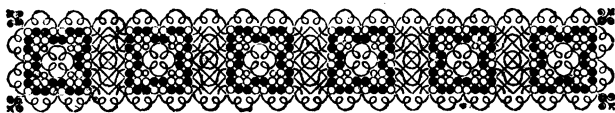
LEGENDE.

- A Tour du Roi.
- B L'Arcade.
- C Tour de la hêrte.
- D Tour basse.
- E La dame lins.
- F Tour Bonetie.
- G Tour du Nord.
- H Fontaine.
- I Chapelle Saint Aubert.
- J Tour du Moulin.
- K Tour des Pêcheurs.



MANCHE.

Echelle au $\frac{1}{5000}$.



A SHORT
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF
MONT SAINT-MICHEL.



IN all the works published respecting *Mont Saint-Michel*, fable is so mingled with history, and falsehood with truth, that it is exceedingly difficult to disentangle facts from the perplexities in which they are involved.

The old manuscripts, ancient history,

the chronicles, *Neustria Pia*, *Gallia Christiana*, and even modern historians who have explored and read all the ancient charters, give us no certain information about this celebrated Mount, in the time of the Druids previously to that of Julius Cesar; they leave us equally in the dark, regarding it, under the Roman power, even so late as the reign of Augustus.

Of popular rumours, probabilities, marvellous traditions, and conjectures, there is no deficiency, but there is not a single *fact* relating to *Saint-Michel*, among the occurrences of those ancient times on which historians agree.

Some of them assert that before the occupation of Gaul by the Romans, the Druids worshipped the great object of Phœnician adoration — the Sun — under the name of Belenus, on this Mount¹, which they have designated by the name of Tumbeleni²; this deity was the Baal of scripture, the Belus of the Assyrians,

¹ Nevertheless the Druids celebrated their mysteries in the shade of forests.

² From Tumba-Beleni — tomb or elevation consecrated to Belenus.

and the Belus or Myrtha of the Gauls.

The same authors conclude that *Tumba Beleni* has been corrupted into *Tombeleine* or *Tombelène*, a name by which, in the present day, another (uninhabited) rock, situated about half a league to the north of *Mont Saint-Michel*, is known.

Other writers to explain the origin of the name, relate the following sentimental tale : A young girl, named Helen, the niece of Hoël, king of Little Brittany, was forcibly taken from her parents by a Spaniard, and conveyed to this rock, where she underwent the extremity of outrage : she died soon afterwards of grief, and was interred in it by her nurse : hence the origin of the name *Tombelène* : *Tumba Helenæ*.

Nor has the marvellous been wanting : *Le Baud* in his *Histoire de Bretagne*¹ has the following version.

When Arthur was encamped at *Harfleur*, intelligence reached him that, a Spanish giant, of prodigious size, had stolen Helen, the niece of king Hoël, his nephew, and taken her to the *Mont de Tombe*, where the church dedicated to *Saint Michel* is now

¹ Page 60.

situated, and where, from fear of this horrible monster, she died, and that her nurse had buried her on another neighbouring Mount. Arthur fought with this giant, and killed him.... Hoël, greatly afflicted at the loss of his niece, erected a tomb and chapel on the Mount where she was interred: hence the origin of the name.

Others have a different version; — that a young girl named Helen, died of grief on this rock, because she could not follow her lover Montgomery, who went with William, duke of Normandy, to effect the conquest of England.

It is matter for regret that nothing very decided or authentic appears on this point, for with the name of Montgomery is connected much interesting matter. This Helen however seems to have been as celebrated in the vicinity of *Saint-Michel* as the heroine of Homer was at Troy. It is unfortunate however for her fame, that she had no such poet to immortalize her.

In innumerable instances, even to our days, the names of places are significant memorials by which a whole history is sometimes conveyed in a single word; but here we have such confusion of records,

such improbabilities that any temple or building had been placed upon the summit of *Mont Saint-Michel* previously to the time of *Saint-Aubert*, that we have no more real ground for deducing the name of *Tombelène* from the above source than from the name of the Trojan Helen, — an inference which the fanciful etymologist might draw from the circumstance (as mentioned by *Desroches*¹), that some of the inhabitants of *Avranchin* joined those Gaulish battalions which went to defend Troy, B. C. 1270, but who only arrived in time to witness the victory of Ulysses and Pyrrhus, and the destruction of Ilium. As they could do nothing to save the city, they received some of the unfortunate Trojans in their ranks, and conducted them to the country of Armorica and other Gaulish provinces².

From the situation of *Avranchin*, which was in the centre of Armorica, and near

¹ Vol. 1, page 5.

² See the *Gaule Poétique de M. Marchangy*, vol. 1, p. 24. — At Paris. — Also Montfaucon's explanation of a medal which represented the siege of Troy, — in his *Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*.

the sea, is it not possible that there may have been a commingling of Trojan blood with that of the inhabitants? If we believe Timagenes, a greek historian of Alexandria, B.C. 54, a few Trojans fled from the Greeks after the sacking of their city and settled in Gaul; and according to the relation of the Druids part of the people were born in the country and part came from foreign lands¹.

Of the various and conflicting conjectures which we have read, we are inclined to adopt that which supposes this mount to have been (under the Gauls) a retreat for the performance of the mysteries of Druidism; but whether it was so used to the time of Julius Cesar or not, we will not presume to decide.

In making this assertion we must suppose that the Druids had their locality at the foot of the rock and not on the summit, for a position of such publicity would have been ill accomodated to the performance of their rites, which they exercised in mysterious obscurity, and therefore in the seclusions of woods and forests, where they

¹ *Sec. M. Recueil de dom Bouquet, vol. 1, préface.*

plunged the fatal knife into the throat of the captive enemy, and offered up bloody sacrifices on their rude altars of stone.

The historians referred to in the note below¹ inform us that here was a college of Druidesses consisting of nine virgins who predicted events and by their soft and mystical language ministered consolation to the wretched, and soothed their anxieties. According to the same authorities they presented to the mariner an arrow and some shells, as charms to still the tempest in its rage, and avert all other dangers and calamities on their contemplated voyage. On the safe return of any vessel, which had been protected by these priestesses, a sailor of its crew was sent to them with presents; they bound upon his shoulders in return a scarf ornamented with shells.

¹ *Essai sur Paris, par Saint-Foir*, t. v, in-12; see also *Hist. universelle par une société*, t. xxx; *M. Houel*, p. 29; *Deric, Hist. de Bretagne*; *Pressan*; *Blondel*; *Manet*; *Goube, Hist. de Normandie*; *Desroches, Hist. du Mont Saint-Michel*.

"On sait d'ailleurs, que tous les peuples du Nord avaient des femmes qui exerçaient le sacerdoce, et d'autres qui, selon leurs croyances, étaient prophétesses, ou fées, *salidica*." *Mezerai, Hist. de France*, t. 1^{er}, in-8^o, page 21.

It is a curious coincidence that shells are sold there to this day for the use of pilgrims, who, in accepting them as sacred, suppose they are offering some mysterious homage to the Archangel, ignorant that the same formality had been practised in the days of paganism.

It was by the sombre light of the moon that the Druidesses assembled, and gave those oracular intimations which determined peace or war, and which they no doubt delivered with the ingenious ambiguity of expression which secured their credit for prophetic wisdom under every contingency. The inhabitants of Gaul placed the most implicit confidence in their imagined miracles; when they spoke, they were deemed to be inspired by the Gods, and men who feared nothing but the wrath of heaven trembled before the priestess of Herta.

Sacred forests were numerous in *Avranchin*, and even in the present day there are several Druidical stones remaining which served as altars for the barbarous superstitions of Druidism; but none such have ever been discovered on *Mont Saint-Michel*, as far as our researches have enabled us to judge.

It is probable that the Romans, accor-

ding to some historians, erected a temple and some other buildings to Jupiter, upon *Mont Saint-Michel*, which in consequence they called Mons Jovis, whence at a later period came *Mont Jou* : but how happens it that no record of this temple or building remains and that no traces of it exist? The Roman buildings were of such solidity that some of their ruins at least, would have remained to our days, or to the time of the chroniclers who wrote shortly after the Roman occupation of Gaul. If any such temple or buildings had ever existed, it is strange that no one has referred to them as real, nor alluded even to their ruins¹.

Again, how is it possible to make this assertion of those historians respecting the existence of the pagan temple correspond

¹ "Which remain even unto this day", is the record of the sacred historian, when relating the circumstances which occasioned the *Cairn* or accumulation of stones at Gilgal.

If a temple to Jupiter had a local habitation on *Mont Saint-Michel*, it would unquestionably have been referred to, directly in confirmation of the assertion regarding its existence, or indirectly from some other motive.

with the relation of *Saint Aubert*, who, to form a platform for the foundation of his small circular church, was obliged to lower the pointed top of the rock? Though we do not believe, the whole of the marvellous statement, furnished by the *MS.* on the subject, we collect sufficient from it, to convince us, that *Saint Aubert* was the first who erected a building on the top of *Mont Saint-Michel*.

In the year 708², the pious *Saint Aubert* succeeded *Jean* in the see of *Avranches*: this excellent man, who distributed his patrimony amongst the poor, whilst he himself became rich in piety, was frequently in the habit of visiting *Mont Tumba* to devote himself entirely to prayer³. On one of these occasions, when he was in a profound meditation, an archangel appeared

¹ See the *MS.* n^o 22, of *Mont Saint-Michel*, deposited in the library at *Avranches*.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Secedebat illuc frequenter sanctus Aubertus, episcopus Abrincensis, ut Deo preces funderet. (Chronique de Sigebert and Breviaire d'Avranches.)*

At that time, says the *abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 94, there were only two small oratories at the foot of the mountain which had been abandoned.

to him : — “ I am , said the archangel , *Saint Michel* ; this Mount is under my protection' ; it is the will of God that you should build a chapel here , and dedicate it to me ; the honour , which shall be rendered to me on this Mount , shall not be inferior to that which is rendered to the angels on *Mont Gargan* ². ” The archangel then disappeared. After the vision had been repeated three times and *Saint Michel* had struck the negligent priest a blow upon the forehead with his finger ³ , the holy man determined to execute the will of Heaven , and immediately set about his work.

After having laboured a long time with a considerable number of villagers , there still remained on the summit a vast rock

¹ *Neustria Pia* , p. 372.

² Admonitus est angelicâ revelatione ut jam dicti summitate loci construeret in honore Archangeli ædem ut cujus celebrabatur veneranda commemoratio in Gargani monte , non minori tripudio celebraretur in pelago. (*MS. of Mont Saint-Michel* , n^o 80.)

³ *MS. of Mont Saint-Michel* , n^o 80. — *Neustria Pia* , and *abbé Desroches*.

which they did not know how to displace : this was effected thus. ¹.

A very distinguished man, named *Bain*, who lived in the village of *Huisnes*, and was the father of twelve sons, had a dream, in which he heard a voice say : — “ Go and work with the others to erect the church of *Saint-Michel*².” Rejoiced at the call, he related his dream to his twelve sons, who hastened with him to fulfil the divine injunction : he soon detached the vast rock from the summit of the mountain³, which so altered its appearance, that the inhabitants of the surrounding country scarcely

¹ Congregatâque rusticorum maximâ multitudine, locum purgavit atque in spatium complanavit in cujus medio duæ perminebant rupes, quas operantium multorum movere non poterant manus nec a suo divellere statu. *MS.* n° 80. — Also in *MSS.* n° 34 and 24, the same and nearly the same words.

² Apparuit cuidam homini, nomine Bayno, in villâ quæ dicitur Itius, qui duodecim filiis amplius magnum inter suos tenebat dignitatis locum, visio. *MS.* n° 80.

Hic igitur per visum monitus ut cum laborantibus et ipse labori insisteret. *MS.* n° 80.

³ Mirum in modum tam facile molem tantæ magnitudinis removit ut nullum pondus in ibi esse videretur. *MS.* n° 80.

knew it again. The historian Naneus¹ says that he seized the rock, nothing doubting, and rolled it to the foot of the mountain. *Neustria Pia* states that he took the youngest of his children, and placed its foot against the enormous mass which was thus quickly detached and rolled down to the base of the mountain. We still see, adds the *abbé Desroches*, something like the print of a child's foot upon this rock².

Thus the pointed top of the rock was miraculously lowered to form a platform for the foundation of the small circular church. If this account be true there

¹ At euidem e numero (tanta est dignatio cœli)
Angelus apparet, rupes mandatqueprehendens
Admoveat, pellatque loco, qui nil dubitandum
Esse ratus, factum aggreditur, rupesqueprehensans
Sic priscâ de sede movet, ceu ponderis, illis
Nil in tam vastâ et saxosâ mole fuisset. *Naneus*.

² Accersere infantem adhuc in cunis vagientem,
filium cujusdam accolæ, nomine Bain, et tunc ad-
moto infantis pede, vestigium, quod etiamnum
visitur, primo impressum est rupi, quæ illicò sùs
deque ruit. *Neustria Pia*, in-fº.

Il est vrai qu'on y voit encore aujourd'hui quel-
que chose de semblable. *Desroches, Histoire du Mont
Saint-Michel*.

never was a Roman building on the summit of the Mount.

From the selections we have made, the reader must perceive that little is known about *Mont Saint-Michel* in the time of the Druids and Romans, while in *France*; and history for many centuries after the commencement of the christian era, has furnished us with no more information respecting it.

According to tradition¹, however, this rocky elevation was formerly situated in a vast forest, which some assert to have been submerged by successive irruptions of the sea, and according to the account preserved in *MS. n° 24*, by the force of a single tide², at the time of the spring or autumnal equinox.

The ancient name of this forest was

¹ *Olim, ut putatur, continenti connexa.... (de Thou.)*

² *Locus ille, qui nutu Dei futuro parabatur miraculo sanctique sui archangeli venerationi.*

Mare quod longè distabat, paulatim assurgens omnem silvæ ejus magnitudinem virtute suâ complanavit et in arenæ suæ formam cuncta redegit, etc. *MSS. n° 24. — N° 34 and n° 80. — The two last do not fix the epoch. — As the former in the episcopacy of Saint Aubert.*

Quokelunde, which was afterwards changed to *Scycy* or *Sissy*, but when or why we know not.

M. de Châteaubriant ¹ says, “ we learn from a description of the *fêtes* of the monastery, by a poetical monk of *Mont Saint-Michel* that, below *Avranches* towards Brittany, was the forest of *Quokelunde*, with abundance of stags, but where there is at present nothing but fish.” And he mentions “ the existence, in his day, of a monument in the forest.” The poet, adds *Châteaubriant*, places the irruption of the sea in the reign of *Childebert III.*, that is in the 8th century ².

From the 2nd vol. of *Essais historiques sur les Bardes*, by *M. l'abbé de La Rue*, we learn that this poet, whom *M. de Châteaubriant* has not named, was *Guillaume de Saint-Pair*, a monk of the abbey who wrote a work in the 12th century, during the abbacy of *Robert de Thorigny*. He wrote in French verse the history of the foundation of this abbey, with that of its abbots, and the miracles, with which it was favoured.

¹ *Essai sur la Littérature Anglaise*, vol. 1, p. 80.

² *Histoire de l'église Gallicane*, vol. 2. — *Histoire de Bretagne*, by *Lobineau*, vol. 1.

This poem, says *M. de La Rue*, is interesting in many respects. First the description of the ancient position of this mass of granite presents important geographical and geological details. According to the poet, this rock, now surrounded by the sea, was formerly environed by a very celebrated forest, which he calls *Quokelunde*; and he adds that it was easy to walk from *Avranches* to *Poelet* and to the city of *Ridolet*. "I know not, says *M. de La Rue*, the position of those ancient places, probably submerged by the sea. But I believe the historical details of the poet, for he wrote under the eye of his abbot, *Robert de Thorigny*, a learned annalist, who could not be easily deceived'."

' The following are the verses quoted by *M. de La Rue*.

" Desous Avranches vers Bretagne
 " Qui tous tems fut terre grifaine,
 " Est la forêt de Quokelunde
 " Dunt grant parole est par le monde;
 " Ceu qui or est mer et areine
 " En icels tems est forest pleine
 " De mainte riche venaison
 " Mes ore il noet, li poisson
 " Dune peast l'en très-bien aler

" These revolutions in the territory of *Mont Saint-Michel*", continues *M. de La Rue*, " ought to be dated, according to the poetical monk, under the episcopacy of *Saint Aubert*, and in the reign of *Childebert III.*"

Tho' the verses we have quoted materially assist us in our decision as to whether the bay of *Mont Saint-Michel* was formerly a forest, or what it is at present, a knowledge of the nature and position of the two places, *Ridolet* and *Poelet*, would throw additional light upon this obscure question, which we despair of elucidating since the researches of so laborious and learned an antiquarian as *M. de La Rue*, have failed.

" Ni estu est ja crendre la mer,

" D'Avranches dreit à Poelet

" A la cité de Ridolet.

" En la forest avait un Mont, etc."

' These verses tend to prove this :

" Uns jovencels, moine est del Mont,

" Deus en son règne part li dunt,

" Guillelme a non de St Paier

" Escrit en cest quaier,

" El tems Robeirt de Thorignié

" Fut cest romans fait et trove, etc."

The manuscript which contains this poem, *M. de La Rue* says was taken to England during the revolution.

In addition to the probabilities already mentioned, in favour of the existence of a forest in the bay of *Mont Saint-Michel*, we may add the corroborating fact that a great number of trees has been found buried under the sands in almost every direction.

It is difficult to say how far this forest extended, for trees are found in the same state (that of perfect blackness), under the waters, from the bay of *Mont Saint-Michel* to *Fort d'Agon*, and between the latter place and Jersey, as proved by the recent surveys of captain White R. N. This officer, distinguished for his scientific knowledge, affirms, that the very numerous soundings which he made in this part prove the former existence of a forest in this portion of *la Manche*.

On recently opening a canal in the marshes of *Saint-Fromond* near *Saint-Lo*, trees were also found, and the proofs that a forest existed in this locality are indisputable. Nor is it a little remarkable that the vegetable substances which have been for so many ages submerged (as we have every reason to suppose) have not been much decomposed by the effects of time; nuts, acorns, and beans have been found in a good state

of preservation, and even large pieces of wood, fit for building purposes, have been dug up : several of these lie on the banks of the unfinished canal, at the present time¹.

This discovery indicates a great and sudden deluge, and although we do not know when the event took place, nor that this forest was a continuation of that of *Scy*, yet the fact just stated, strongly attests the existence of the forest of *Scy*.

The constant tradition of all ages, perpetuated even to our days, strengthens this opinion ; and the accounts of many historians and chroniclers, and hagiographers almost establish it.

If the reader wishes to search farther, he may consult the *Annals of Mabillon*; *Gallia Christiana* ; *Neustria Pia* ; the several MSS. of *Mont Saint-Michel*, in the library at *Avranches* ; the *Researches of M. l'abbé Manet* on the bay of *Cancale* and *Mont Saint-Michel* ; and the abridged History of the lives of the Bishops of *Coutances* by *M. Rouault*, curé of *Saint-Pair*, who informs us that *Léonicien*, third bishop of *Coutances*,

¹ M. Boudent-Godelinière. *Notice Historique sur le Mont Saint-Michel*.

(elected A. D. 500) often walked over the vast and frightful solitude of *Scycy* to preach the gospel there. He also states that in 525 *Saint Gaud* died in *Scycy*, and that, about the year 540, *Saint Pair* worn out by age and religious exertion, left *Avranches* for *Scycy*, to die there in the society of his brethren: the *cure* states also that *Saint Senier*, an anchorite in the desert of *Scycy*, who was afterwards bishop of *Avranches*, died, in 566, while on a visit to his brethren, in his ancient solitude; — which must have been the forest in question.

We may then almost consider it certain, that there was formerly a forest in the bay of *Mont Saint-Michel*.

Whether *Saint Aubert*, the 12th bishop of *Avranches*, was induced to do so by divine or natural impulse matters not, but about 709 he built upon *Mont Saint-Michel* a chapel or round oratory large enough to contain, within its enclosure, a hundred persons¹.

¹ Qui statim omnipotenti Deo gratias agens et implorans archangeli Michaelis auxilium, exurgens lætus opus aggressus est. Construxit itaque vir domini Ausbertus fabricam non culmine subtilitatis celsam, sed in modum cripte rotundam centum ut æstimatur hominum capacem. MS. n^o 80.

The wonderful credulity, and corresponding inventions of the human mind in those days of ignorance, superstition and ~~deceit~~, have a curious illustration, in an anecdote recorded by Father *P. Damoustier* who relates that the first hermits, who established themselves upon the island rock were supplied with provisions by the clergy of the neighbouring village of *Beauvoir*, and were conveyed by an ass, which, on an unlucky day, was devoured by a wolf, that, contrary to its nature, became trained to perform the duties of the ass¹.

The summit of the rock was levelled, — whether by the slight pressure of the child's foot or by the more probable means of human labour, matters not — the church built, and dedicated to *Saint-Michel*.

For so solemn an occasion as the consecration of this edifice, it had been con-

¹ *Cibos et alimenta solebat eis mittere parochus (de Beauvoir)..... Huic (monti) sarcinæ ferendæ assueverat asinus, qui tandem præda factus est lupo obviante, qui divinâ providentiâ ac potentiâ id officii exhibere coactus fuit. Neustria Pia.*

sidered necessary according to the temper of the age, to have some sacred relic, which would impart sanctity and importance to the church.

Saint Aubert therefore when the foundation was being prepared¹, sent three clergy of the church of *Avranches*, of which he was bishop, to *Mont Saint-Ange*² on the shores of the Adriatic, where they obtained a shred of the veil which covered the altar of *Saint-Michel*, and a small piece of the marble upon which the altar stood. During the time of their absence, which was a year³,

¹ Pour en faire la dédicace et y placer des reliques, il se détermina à envoyer au Mont Gargan trois clercs de son église. Ils obtinrent un morceau du voile qui couvrait l'autel de Saint-Michel, et une partie du marbre sur lequel il s'était montré. — *Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 100; also *MSS. of Mont Saint-Michel*, n° 80 and n° 24.

² It was also called *Mont Gargan* as many manuscripts prove.

Partem scilicet rubei pallioli, quod ipse memoratus archangelus in Monte Gargano, supra altare quod ipse construxerat posuit, et partem marmoris supra quod stetit. *MS. n° 80*.

³ *M. Blondel* says two years.

the chapel was completed : when they ascended the hill of *Beauvoir* on their return they could scarcely believe their senses , for , instead of the Mount in the middle of a vast forest , as it was on their departure¹, they saw all the country between it and the hill converted into a vast sandy plain².

Of the ancient state of the bay so often referred to , the learned antiquarian, *M. de Gerville* , has greatly enlightened us by his researches on the geography of this destroyed country. We learn from him , that it was crossed by a Roman road which led from *Saint-Pair* to *Remes* ; that it was used in the time of William the conqueror we are shewn by the *Bayeux* tapestry , though since that period it has been almost impassable.

But the most convincing proof that *Mont*

¹ Interea nuncii repedantes, post multa itineris spatia, ad locum quo digressi fuerant quasi novum ingressi sunt orbem quem primum veprium dempsitate relinquerant plenum. *MSS. n° 24, and n° 34.*

² La mer , ayant enflé ses vagues , abattit tous les arbres de la forêt , et la réduisit à l'état d'une vaste grève.

Olim, ut putatur, continenti connexa..... (*de Thou.*)

Saint-Michel was once situated in the middle of a vast forest, is the map¹ constructed by a canon of *Coutances*, in which the road is carried through the forests of *Scyzy* and *Chesay* to *Valognes*, leaving *Mont Saint-Michel* to the right at some distance from the sea.

Visitors passing to the south of the rock of *Granville* at low water on the road to *Saint-Pair*, see the dry and rugged trunk of a tree covered with polypi and seaweed², which have supplied the place of the living bark ;—there it remains a sapless and withered indication that the features of sylvan scenery once smiled, where now we perceive nothing but the tracery of a desolating Ocean. — It is the last oak of the forest ; — the silent and solitary witness of a great catastrophe, that men have long forgotten, and only conjec-

¹ *M. le baron de Pirch*, the V. P. of the Archeological Society of *Avranches*, informs us that antiquarians can find no such map, though they have made every exertion to do so.

² Vous trouvez un tronc sec et décharné, presque entièrement couvert de coraux, de polypiers et d'algues marines. *E. Houël*.

ture now, from local and external evidences. When this old time bleached trunk shall no longer be able to resist the wasting influence of the sea which has embraced it for more than a thousand years, one of those evidences will have passed away.

On this remnant of a tree the sea fowl flaps its wings, and like the raven which, in the deserts of Saba and Assyria, may be seen resting on the fragment of a column, proclaiming "this is all that remains of the gorgeous palaces and habitations of countless dead", the Ocean bird upon his solitary perch seems placed there to indicate that this sandy waste, now profitless and without a name, once teemed with vegetable life and bore immortal souls upon its lovely and fertile surface!

"..... Where is the fame
Which the vain glorious mighty of the earth
Seek to eternize? Oh! the faintest sound,
From time's light foot fall, the minutest wave
That swells the flood of ages, whelms in nothing
The unsubstantial bubble....."

Though we read of two unoccupied oratories at the foot of *Mont Saint-Michel* (then called *Mont Tumba*) at the time

when *Saint Aubert* retired there in pious meditation, we have no account of any houses being erected upon it until sixty years after he had completed and consecrated his chapel to the archangel.

The erection of those houses originated in the following circumstances : from the reign of the Antonines to that of *Charlemagne*, who succeeded his father *Pepin* in 768, the current of barbaric conquest had continued to flow thro' the Danube and the Rhine. The great effort of *Charlemagne's* life was to check its torrents and he was successful. For the first time the northern nations feared to push onwards to the fertile regions of Normandy to which their ancestors had emigrated. But the more perilous path by sea, lay open, and the surplus population of Denmark and Scandinavia, gained its shores in their rude galleys : every reader of English History knows with what success.

Of all the descents which the barbarians of the north made on Normandy, none equalled in cruelty that under their leader *Rolf* or *Rollo* in 875. They desolated the country in their progress, burnt towns, destroyed villages, and pulled down chur-

ches : the wretched inhabitants flew to their temples for protection , but in vain , for these pirates massacred them at their altars without distinction — priests , old men , women and children. The few who escaped concealed themselves in the forests with their sacred relics. The church of *Coutances* was burnt, and the whole of *Cotentin* was peopled by idolaters. The diocese of *Avranches* experienced the same melancholy fate : the majority of the inhabitants were cut to pieces by the battle-axes of the barbarians ; — some to escape the fury of the pagan enemy , renounced their baptism , and made the required protestations of a pagan creed , with the most absurd formalities ; — others retired to the marshes of *Aucey*, *Mont Saint-Michel*, and other places on the confines of Brittany² where they

¹ *Histoire de Bretagne*, by *Le Baud*.

² *Wace*, a native of *Jersey* and a monk of *Bayeux* in the 12th century, relates the fact in the following verses.

En plusors liex par la ruine
Que firent la gent Sarrazine

.....

Et le rivage contre Mont
Desiques en Bretagne sont

built the church and castle of *Aucey*, and the castle of *Montaigu*, about a quarter of a league from *Montanel*, and at the northern entrance of the forest of *Blanchelande*¹. The church of *Carnet*, also on the marshes of Brittany, seems to have been founded at this time; and the fugitives, called in the manuscript² *voleurs* (thieves), built houses on *Mont Saint-Michel*, made gardens, planted the vine, the fig, and the medlar, and upon the ruins of two small oratories built a church, and dedicated it to *Saint Pierre*³.

In 963 or 965, the church which *Saint*

Desque l'armée et sa compagne
La sest arretée en Bretagne.

See his History of the Normans in verse:—You may judge from it what progress has been made in language on the borders of the bay of *Mont Saint-Michel* since the 7th century.

¹ See *l'abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 123.

² MS. n^o 22, of *Mont Saint-Michel*.

³ Dans ce même x^e siècle on voit le bourg, l'église paroissiale du *Mont Saint-Michel*, exister, par une chartre de Richard, duc de Normandie; on ne peut conséquemment en reculer plus loin la fondation. — *Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 125.

Aubert built, was demolished, but how or why we know not.

Richard I, duke of Normandy, raised a larger one in its place¹, and added many spacious buildings² for the residence of the regular monks of the order of Saint Benedict, whom he substituted for the priests of *Avranches*, who had become odious for their debaucheries³; these priests who were forcibly expelled, says *MS. n° 80 of Mont Saint-Michel*; took with them the charters and parchments of the monastery, — a great loss if the statement be true. The church hitherto only a collegiate one, was now constituted an abbey-church, and *Mainard*⁴,

¹ Ricardum ejus nominis, primum Nortmannorum ducem, in Monte Tumbâ monasterium in honorem Sancti Michaëlis restauravisse. *Chronicon Sigeberti*.

² Delubrum miræ magnitudinis spaciosaque mœnia construxit. *Gallia Christiana; Neustria Pia*.

³ Les repas, la chasse, et toutes sortes de débauches, absorbèrent des richesses qui n'étaient destinées qu'à des œuvres de piété et de charité. — *Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 136.

⁴ Cum verò præcipua, ut dictum est, abbatis Mainardi industriâ in omnibus claresceret, Nortmannorum duci et primatibus ejus satis comperta placuisset, inde eum abstrahere et majori decreve-

selected by *Richard*, was its first abbot, under whom the monks were constantly occupied in reading and writing either on theological or secular subjects.

Amongst other men of celebrity belonging to their order, who had been educated in this abbey at the epoch of which we are speaking, were *Roland* who was elected bishop of *Dol*, and *Guerin* who was the principal of the abbey of *Cerisy*¹.

The buildings were scarcely finished when they were all consumed by fire; but no one has told us how it originated².

Richard II rebuilt the church with great magnificence during the abbacy of *Hildebert*, and added to it the *basilique*³.

runt honore sublimare; denique ad Montem Sancti Michaelis archangeli compulerunt migrare; quatenus canonicis eliminatis monachos quibus præesset in regulari disciplinâ deberet undecumque aggregare. *Chronicon Fontanellense, caput VI.*

¹ *Gallia Christiana*, t. XI, p. 514.

² *Hist. MS. of Dom Huynes; MS. of the Mount; Gallia Christiana, Neustria Pia.* — Some date this accident 1001, others in 1003, and others in 1008.

³ *Décoré à juste titre du nom de basilique. Hist. MS. of Dom Huynes, Neustria Pia, Gallia Christiana.* The origin of the terme *basilique* which has been

The platform on the top of the Mount not being sufficiently extensive for the projected building, an artificial one was formed by means of very massy arches and round colossal pillars to support the choir'. The subterranean parts and almost

applied to large churches, according to *M. de Caumont* and *M. de Gerville*, is as follows. — In Rome were several buildings serving for the double purpose of courts of justice and assemblages of merchants, which went by the name of *basiliques*; by *Constantine* and his successors these buildings were consecrated for the catholic worship.

Designed to contain a great concourse of people, they were very large and of a grave and sombre style of architecture. Externally they had neither columns nor any kind of ornament. Internally they were divided, length-wise, into three unequal parts, by two rows of parallel pillars: at the end of these was a vacant space, and on the other side opposite the middle gallery a semi-circular place, where the judges sat, very similar to what we see in cathedrals where the clergy take the place occupied (according to the *Diction. des Origines*) by the judges.

All the churches, built in the time of *Constantine* in the east and the west, were constructed after the model of these *basiliques*. The principal entrance was at one end, and the other end was terminated in a semicircle.

' Ut autem ad ecclesiæ fabricam spatium sat

all the nave of this church are still remaining¹.

When the altar of the church, built upon those vast pillars, was nearly completed, much embarrassment was occasioned, from the circumstance, that the position of the church was reversed as to east and west; but when it was known that the church of Saint Benedict in *Paris* was similarly placed, the building was continued without alteration of the plan.

It was the custom to place the principal altar of churches either towards the rising sun or the north, but *M. de La Rue*² says, that this custom did not originate until the 11th century. So certain is he of this, that amongst other reasons which he assigns for thinking that the church of *Saint Georges-du-Château*, in *Caen*, is of a preceding

amplum in cacumine montis haberet, crassiores pilas, muros et fornices extruit; supra autem ecclesiæ fabricam collocavit. *Gallia Christiana*.

¹ The nave however was not finished by *Richard*, but by the two abbots *Beaumont*.

The vault in which are the massy pillars served for a long time as a chapel.

² In his *Essais Historiques sur Caen*, vol. 1, p. 84.

century, he says, "the sanctuary is turned towards the west."

In 1792 or 1793, the nave was shortened about 12 *mètres* to give more length to the platform. It was at that time enclosed by a Grecian façade.

The architect adapted to this façade, columns with capitals after the style of the 11th century : — connoisseurs criticize this work from its combination of orders which are usually kept distinct.

Radulphe or *Raoul de Beaumont*, 8th abbot, constructed the pillars of this nave to a certain height, and another *Radulphe de Beaumont*, his successor, completed them : — the latter built the northern walls, galleries and cemetery for the monks ; — he also planned the vast body of this building which in our days is called the *Merveille* or wonder.

Mont Saint-Michel sustained a very important siege in 1091.

William the Conqueror who died A. D. 1087, bequeathed Normandy to Robert, his eldest son ; — England to his second son, William Rufus ; — and to his third son, Henry, 5,000 *francs*, with all his personal property. Robert, being in great want of money, sold *Cotentin* to Henry,

which included all that is now called *Avranchin*. Robert and William afterwards agreed to wrest this acquisition from their younger brother, who, in order to defend himself, attempted to fortify *Coutances*, *Avranches* and some other places; but finding that he had not sufficient force to accomplish this, he determined on making *Mont Saint-Michel* his strong hold. Having done this, he solicited assistance from his brother-in-law (*Allain VI*), which being afforded, the struggle became more serious, and his brother William having joined his forces to those of Robert, they resolved on besieging the place.

For more than forty days¹ the efforts of the brothers proved ineffective, though the place was not, at that time, strongly fortified²; and during the siege Henry and his knights performed prodigies of valour.

William having on one occasion ventured

¹ Amplius quadraginta dies obsedit..... (*Polydori Vergilii Anglicæ Historiæ* lib. x.)

Per totam quadragesimam. (*Historiæ Anglicanæ scriptores* x, vol. 1, in-f^o, p. 216.)

² Naturâ munitissimum.....(*Polydori Vergilii Anglicæ Historiæ* lib. x.)

upon the sands, at low water, was closely pursued by some of Henry's soldiers, and struck to the ground by the blow of a lance¹. Most historians say that, when the soldier who made the blow was about to plunge the sword into his throat, William exclaimed: "Hold, I am the king of England²," which saved his life, the soldier not wishing to do him further injury.

M. de Roujoux says this is an invention of the Normans, to conceal the fact that a king of England had *run away*, which according to him was the case, and that for concealment he had covered himself

¹ Ubi quādam die rex Willielmus tabernaculum suum egressus cum paucis, irruit in multos hostes ipse improvisus, sed equo suo sub femoribus suis occiso, ipse per pedem diū tractus probitate lorice suæ salvatus est ne læderetur. (*Henrici de Knighton Chronica.*)

² Miles autem qui eum dejecerat manum ad capulum gladii sui aptavit ut regem feriret. Cui rex: quiesce, nebulo, rex Angliæ sum ego. Tremunt vocem vulgus militum, alterum equum regi adducunt. Quo ascenso, inquit quis eum dejecerit. Ego, ait miles ille qui hoc fecerat, nec putavi regem deicere sed militem. Et rex: per vultum de Luca et tu mihi de cætero carior eris. (*Henry of Knighton.*) — See also *Histoire de Thou*. — *History of England by Tyrrel*.

with the saddle of his horse, which had been killed : but this statement is not probable. Henry was obliged to surrender ; and he retreated to Vexin accompanied by a few followers.

Among the records of the abbey, about this time, we find that a few seconds after the monks had quitted it (on Holy Saturday, 1103) the vault of the nave fell in, and with it, a part of the dormitory¹; the cause of this accident, like the previous destruction by fire, has not been assigned, nor is it a matter of any interest now.

On Good Friday A. D. 1112, the church was struck by lightning, and together with all the buildings, was consumed, except the vaults and some small portions to an extent not precisely defined.

Roger, 11th abbot, soon repaired these disasters ; — in 1117, the reconstructions were far advanced, and, five years afterwards, all the buildings were completed, but with more solidity and beauty than before.

This abbot also reconstructed the interior

¹ See *MS. of Dom Huynes.*

of all the edifices on the north side, and that beautiful portion of the building, — *la grande Salle des Chevaliers*, — he also built very splendid stables, and arched the cloisters with stone which previously to his time were formed of wood.

One of the most celebrated tournaments mentioned in history took place, between the Bretons and Normans, on the sands of *Mont Saint-Michel*, in the year 1135. The particulars of this are detailed in the first book of the life of *Geoffroy* *r.*, duke of Normandy ¹.

It seems that on this occasion the parties did not joust, one individual against another, as usual, but detachment against detachment; and, though on a petty scale, army against army: the Bretons were eventually victorious ².

¹ By John, a monk of *Marmoutier*, p. 22 and 23.

² This account of the tournament is taken from the abbot *Manet*. We fear that he has committed some error relative to the source from which he has extracted it; for we do not think that there ever were any Dukes of Normandy of the name of *Geoffroy*. Perhaps he intended to say Duke of Brittany, as there were some Dukes of Brittany of that name; but we still doubt if there were more than five so called.

About 1155, *Bernard*, 13th abbot, rebuilt that part of the nave which had been neglected since it fell, in 1103. This was the abbot who erected 'some cells on *Mont Tombelène*', whither he occasionally retired with his monks².

If we are astonished at the numerous disasters, which this wonder of nature and art has experienced we must feel equal surprize at the determined zeal and industry of the abbots who never failed to repair them.

In the year 1138, many houses and nearly all the buildings belonging to the monastery were again destroyed by fire³,

¹ *Grand Dictionnaire géographique par La Martinière*, 7^e vol. in-f^o. — See also *Gallia Christiana*, t. xi; *M. l'abbé Desroches*. vol. 1, p. 287.

² He also built a priory, upon a mountain in the county of Cornwall, which he dedicated to Saint Michael. The priory of Cornwall was a dependency of the abbey of *Mont Saint-Michel*, by virtue of a charter granted by Edward the Confessor, and afterwards confirmed by Robert, duke of Cornwall.

³ *Eodem anno debacchatione Abrincatensium furientium combustum est castrum Montis, excepta ecclesia, et officinis monachorum, mense Augusto. Chronicon breve du Mont Saint-Michel.*

fortunately the grand apartment (*corps de logis*) built by *Roger II*, was spared : — this apartment at a later period was used as a refectory and a church. A mob of scoundrels, from *Avranches*, occasioned this conflagration ; — taking advantage of the troubles which desolated the province, they wilfully set fire to the abbey. The author of *MS. n° 80* gives us to understand that it was from a conspiracy of some of the inhabitants of the Mount this calamity arose¹.

The abbey had now become very rich from the produce of pilgrimages and other religious donations : — some of the donors, but more particularly their heirs, demanded a share of the property which had been given to the abbey : — to put an end to such claims, the abbot instituted a trial at *Caen*, when it was decided that donors or their heirs could only claim the *prayers* of the clergy.

In the year 1155, the whole rock experienced so violent a shock of earthquake, say the authors of *Neustria Pia* and *Dom Huynes*, that it was apprehended the edifices would have fallen.

¹ *M. l'abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 287.

M. de Gerville states that there was another fire on this Mount in 1161, but that the loss was not great : — the *MSS. of Leroy* record the same fact ; but *Maximilien Raoul* says it is not noticed either in the manuscript History of *Dom Huynes*, in *Gallia Christiana* or *Neustria Pia*.

Thirty-nine years after the conflagration of 1138¹, the edifices had been repaired with so much care by *Robert de Torigny*, 15th abbot, that they were more beautiful than before, he even added many useful buildings, and increased the number of monks from thirty to sixty².

About twenty-six years after this abbot had completed his labours, Philip-Augustus invaded Normandy, in consequence of the insubordination of John, king of England, who had refused to pay the homage which the sovereigns of England had been accustomed to offer to those of France, in acknowledgment of the superior sovereignty of the latter respecting the duchy of Normandy. It is hardly necessary to remark

¹ According to *Robert Dumont*.

² *Gallia Christiana*; *MS. of Dom Huynes*; *Neustria Pia*.

that the cause of John's refusal to submit to the summons of Philip on this occasion, was his disinclination to appear before the Peers of France to answer for the murder of his nephew Arthur, of which he was accused.

Though checked in his progress by the court of *Rome*, Philip made an easy conquest of Normandy, which the imbecility and cowardice of John delivered to his arms without defence; but *Jourdan* or *Jourdain*, 17th abbot, faithful to the king of England, refused to surrender, and maintained an obstinate siege against *Guy de Thouars*, count of Brittany, who, as an ally of the king of France, came with a numerous army to take forcible possession of *Mont Saint-Michel* ¹.

With all their exertions, however the invaders became masters only of the town,

¹ We learn the particulars of this expedition from William the Breton, who lived at this epoch, and wrote the particulars of it in latin verses.

Est locus in medio situs æquore, sic tamen ut non
Æquor semper ibi stagnet, sed quotidianis
Et fluit et refluit vicibus, crescente sorore
Phœbi, consuetas seu decrescente per horas,
Suscipiens ab eâ majores sive minores
Crescendi motus, et sic locus ille marinis
Fluctibus ambitur nunc et nunc littore sicco.

Guillelmi Britonis Armorici Philippidos lib. viii.

to which, out of revenge, they set fire, before they retreated. On this occasion, every thing on the Mount was destroyed, except the walls, vaults and buildings in stone¹.

After Philip-Augustus had pacified the Normans, he sent a large sum of money to repair the losses sustained here². With this sum *Jourdan* not only restored the abbey, but added so many magnificent embellishments that some ill informed and superficial authors attribute the whole of this celebrated building to him.

About the year 1220, *Raoul de Villedieu*, 20th abbot³, commenced the cloister, which was not finished until 1228. The galleries

¹ Igneque supposito domibus, vis ignea sursùm Scandit, et ecclesiæ decus omne locumque sacratum Resque monasterii cremat insatiabilis omnes.

Guil. Brit. lib. viii.

² Compatitur priùs ecclesiæ rerumque ruinis Largifluâque manu monachos juvat in renovando.

Guil. Brit.

³ The author of the *Histoire pittoresque du Mont Saint-Michel*, attributes the beautiful cloisters to *Raoul de Villedieu*, 20th abbot, — and *M. de Gerville* to *Raoul des Isles*, 18th abbot. We think with the former.

and colonnades of this precious specimen of art and beauty were executed with a lightness, taste and elaboration of detail, which do not seem appropriate to that age, and are considered the most beautiful *morceaux* of architecture existing in France : the interior of the quadrangle is supported by two hundred and twenty-two pillars in triple row, each range of which forms a small aisle with a beautifully pointed arch, the most graceful and delicate that can be imagined. This charming building, suspended as it seems in mid air, appears to have been placed there, to relieve the stern aspect of the structure. Boldness, grandeur and sublimity were the striking characteristics of the architecture of the two succeeding centuries ; these beautiful cloisters shew that grace and richness were not wanting in this.

The superb buildings, between the cloister and the apartment of the *corps-de-garde*, and perhaps the chapter house near the cloister, were built by *Richard Turstin*, 21th abbot, about 1257. This abbot obtained from pope Alexander iv the privilege of wearing the special badges of episcopacy, the crosier, staff and mitre; but the Bishops

jealous of his wearing the insignia of their order, and publicly bestowing blessings on the populace, obtained from the same pope a decree, which limited the exercise of this episcopal privilege granted to *Turstin*, to the precincts of his monastery¹.

As if fate had destined the buildings on this eminence to perish by fire, and man had not the power to accomplish the decree, lightning, for the second time², was the instrumental agent of the destruction of the church, upon which it fell in the year 1300, when the conflagration was so great that the metal of the bells, which had been placed there by *Bernard*, 15th abbot, about 1135³, were liquified by the heat: — at the same time nearly all the houses of the town were reduced to ashes.

¹ MS. of *Mont Saint-Michel*, in the library at Avranches, n^o 22.

² Fifth fire, — second from lightning.

³ According to *M. Manet*, in his *Histoire de Bretagne*, vol. 1, p. 241, in the year 1047, the monks of *Mont Saint-Michel* had a large bell cast (which they called *Rollon*) to collect their vassals, whenever they saw, from the top of the tower, that the Bretons were collecting for a campaign.

William *Duchâteau*, 25th abbot, was occupied, during the whole of his abbacy, in repairing the damages which this fire had effected on the abbey and in alleviating the calamities of the inhabitants who had suffered by it.

Fifty years afterwards, this rock was again struck by lightning; the buildings, scarcely restored to a good condition, were then greatly injured, but by the zeal of *Nicolas Levitrier*, 28th abbot, they were so magnificently repaired as to appear more beautiful than before.

In 1374, it was, for the fourth time, struck with lightning, and suffered from conflagration for the seventh time¹. The intensity of the heat, on this occasion (as on a preceding one), was such, that the metal of the bells was liquified and ran like melted wax².

Happily for the preservation of this extraordinary pile of buildings, which seems in the course of its gradual erection to have assumed the architectural style of

¹ MS. n^o 22.

² Densissimâ mole ut cerâ liquescente.

each succeeding age which witnessed its formation, the zeal of the abbots for rebuilding or repairing increased in its intensity with each successive conflagration.

Geoffroy de Servon, a native of *Avranches* and 29th abbot, distinguished himself especially in this respect, nor did he confine his labours merely to repairs, for he added the entire chapel of *Sainte-Catherine* which afterwards became the apartment of the abbots¹.

Pierre Le Roy, a native of *Orval*, in the diocese of *Coutances*, succeeded *Geoffroy de Servon*, in the year 1386. *Le Roy* was one of the most noted divines of his day²: he decorated the church magnificently and added many useful buildings³.

¹ *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 80.

² *Jean Huynes*, MS. n° 22; see also MS. n° 34 in the library at *Avranches*.

³ MS. *Gesta Petri Regis*, n° 34, says. — Item tempore suo fuit constructa et de novo ædificata turris quadrata prima tunc ex nomine suo Petro, sic vocataque Baillima ab aliquibus nuncupatur, item cameræ quæ sunt inter ipsam perrinam et capellam de Sanctâ Catharinâ, infirmarium etiam propè belantaram fecit augmentari, item duas turres portæ cum muro inter ipsum et turrim refectorii de novo

This man was one of the most celebrated and perhaps the most remarkable of all the abbots of the monastery. He taught in his cloister sacred and profane history, civil and divine law, and to the younger brethren grammar; he purchased a great number of excellent works on theology, civil law, literature, etc., for the use of his establishment, many of which are preserved even to this day, and are now in the library of the college of *Avranches*. He kindly acted as arbitrator in all disputes within his reach, and even visited the places where they arose that he might obtain the most correct information concerning the points at issue: he recorded the evidence and decisions, which he afterwards embodied in a book, called the

constructo, item tempore suo à monitione domini papæ factæ sunt cameræ ligneæ in dormitorio, item in ecclesiâ capellæ doctorum et beati Johannis contiguæ et turris ecclesiæ per prædecessorem suum inchoatæ magnificè sunt consummatæ, item extrâ monasterium fecit fieri grangias de Bureceyo de Stay de dono Johannæ de Tabulâ, de Ycio, Halas de Genecio, cum pluribus molendinis in terris dicti monasterii, cæteraque ipsius monasterii ædificia existentia in bono statu manutenere sollicitè percuravit, infinita bona fecitque, lingua non sufficit enarrare.

Grand Livre de Pierre or *Papier routier*, and also collected and arranged all the charters and records of his monastery, from its foundation to his own time, and had a *Chartrier*¹ made expressly for their security², which, says an historian, is the most beautifully and artfully contrived of any in France: we have not means of ascertaining whether the *Chartrier* has been preserved or not.

This excellent man was succeeded by Robert *Jolivet* or *Jolinet*, a native of *Montpinchon*, in the diocese of *Coutances*. In the early part of this abbot's administration he was apparently solicitous to walk in the steps of his predecessor, but his actual course did not correspond with his intentions, and in 1420 he retired to *Rouen*³.

¹ A place where charters are kept.

² For further particulars of this extraordinary man, see *MSS.* n° 14 and n° 34.

³ The tomb of this abbot may now be seen in a chapel of the church of *Saint-Michel* at *Rouen*, — with the following inscription: " Ci git Robert, " abbé du Mont Saint-Michel, conseiller du roi, qui " décéda le 17 juillet 1444. Priez Dieu pour son ame. "

to be near the English¹, who were then in possession of that town as well as of the whole of Normandy with the exception of *Mont Saint-Michel* which they had not been able to take : — but previously to his retiring he had built, round the town, the irregular enclosure of towers and bastions that we still see².

The English, in 1423 according to *Dumoulin*, and 1424 by the account of *Masseville*, indignant at seeing the fortress still holding out, determined on making a bold attempt to become masters of it : some fresh troops commanded by count *de Lescale*, accordingly, prepared to attack it. The fortifications that Robert *Jolivet* had constructed greatly assisted in repulsing the invaders, but the valour of one hundred and twenty gentlemen, whose names will be found in the appendix,

¹ It appears from the MS. of *Mont Saint-Michel* n° 22, that he had been bribed by the king of England to abandon the Mount, and *Huet* in *Origine de Caen*, says : " Il portait la qualité de son conseiller et quelquefois de son chancelier." *Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 136.

² *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 136.

effected more. Commanded by *Louis d'Estouteville*, they defended the place with courage above all praise.

The siege lasted many days. The English neglected nothing to attain success : taking advantage of the eight successive days in the month on which the Mount is unsurrounded by the sea, they brought up their artillery, two pieces of which were of such extraordinary calibre as to carry granite bullets of fifteen inches in diameter.

In spite of the obstinate resistance of the besieged, the besiegers effected a breach in the walls of the town ; but it was impossible to hoist their cumbrous artillery higher. The sea in its regular course flowed on, and the assailants were compelled to retreat to the main land.

The garrison, when they were preparing to retreat, with the brave *Jehan de la Haye*, baron of *Coulonces*, at their head, made a vigorous sortie, and put the enemy into great disorder. Pursued to extremity, they lost many men, and were compelled to abandon part of their artillery, particularly the two enormous pieces which may be still seen at the gate of the

town walls, where the inhabitants shew them with great pride as an indisputable proof of the valour of their ancestors. They are remarkable for their form and prodigious size, being eleven feet long and constructed of iron bars two inches thick, bound with hoops of the same metal. One has a bore of eighteen inches, and the other fourteen. The other guns which the besiegers left, were sold by the governors of the place in the sixteenth century. The besieged in turn became the assailants, and made several prisoners, amongst whom was Nicolas Burdett, one of the chiefs.

The English, irritated but not disheartened by their losses, determined on reducing the place by famine. With this intention they encamped in the various parishes on the east of the fortress: — on the north they occupied *Tombelène*, and the sea was covered with their ships; in short they surrounded the Mount by all the means that they could devise to intercept supplies of every kind.

The duke of *Beaufort*, assisted by the knights of *Montauban*, *Combours*, and others, hastily equipped a small fleet on the shores of *Saint-Malo* and *Cancale*, and taking ad-

vantage of a spring tide, boldly attacked the ships which the English had stationed to blockade the Mount. This undertaking, though extremely incautious, proved successful, for the attacking force took some ships and sunk or dispersed the rest, and at the same time supplied the Mount with provisions and military stores. This success so discouraged the English, that they decided on raising the siege. Before doing so, however, they destroyed all their works, except those on *Mont Tombelène*, where they left a strong garrison, no doubt, with the intention of surprising, or at all events of harassing the place, which they were compelled to abandon. They did not finally quit *Mont Tombelène* till after the decisive battle of *Formigny*, A. D. 1450, in the reign of *Charles VII*, when they were obliged to evacuate the whole of Normandy¹.

¹ For further particulars of the siege of *Mont Saint-Michel* see *MS. n° 22* of the Mount, in the library at *Avranches*; *MSS.* of *Dr Cousin*; *Mémoire historique sur ce Siège*, by *l'abbé de Laroque*; *Notice of M. Blondel*; *Gallia Christiana*, t. *XI*; *Chartrier de M. de Guiton*, etc., etc.; *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2.

This province which through William the Con-

The choir of the church fell down, in the year 1421, from what cause is not known, — but it was not repaired until 1451. Robert *Jolivet*, though absent, received the whole of the revenues, and the monks were obliged to sell many precious articles to defray some of the expenses of the siege.

Charles V sent them a sum of money sufficient to supply their immediate wants, and obtained from the pope permission to grant indulgences for the purpose of inducing the faithful to make pilgrimages to the abbey, and to present donations¹;

queror belonged to England in 1066, was reunited to France, under John Lackland, also king of England, in 1203, by Philip-Augustus, king of France: it was again retaken by Henry V, king of England, in 1416, when *Charles VI* was king of France; and in 1450, *Charles VII* again annexed it to France, of which kingdom it has remained a portion to the present time.

The battle of *Formigny* took place April 15, 1450 betwen, say the French historians, less than 4,000 French against 6 or 7,000 English. Nearly two thirds of the latter were left dead on the field of battle.

¹ MS. of *Mont Saint-Michel*, n° 22.

La cause de notre attachement à ce vénérable,

but all those resources, though considerable, were absorbed by the expenses of the siege.

A singular circumstance occurred on the sands about this period¹.

Francis I, duke of Brittany, believing that he had cause of complaint against his brother *Gilles de Bretagne*, imprisoned him for several years, in different dungeons, in which he was cruelly and unjustly detained, suing in vain for mercy, while the harsh determination of Francis seemed to augment in proportion to the humiliation of his unfortunate prisoner.

Francis apprehensive of his brother's escape notwithstanding all the precautions taken to prevent it, suggested to the governor of the castle of *Hardouinaye*, where the prisoner was then confined, that the latter should be despatched by sword or poison; but the governor nobly refused obedience to such an order, as did also

disait Charles v, vient de ce qu'il est consacré au prince des anges, et de ce qu'il a été honoré de miracles éclatans. *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 83.

¹ According to *M. de Roujoux*. — See also the MS. of *Jean Huynes*.

some others to whom the duke had made the same infamous proposition. Finding however three wretches willing to fulfil his purposes, he abandoned his victim to their ferocity. The ruffians, having deliberated on the mode of destroying him, determined on leaving the unfortunate prince to die of hunger. Pressed by want, he placed himself at the iron bars of his prison window, and uttered the most piercing cries, and agonizing groans. Some poor peasants who heard them were touched with compassion, but they dared not render him any assistance.

A young woman however, with the characteristic tenderness of her sex, could not resist the impression which his lamentations produced upon her heart, and, at the risk of her life, succeeded, under the shades of night, in conveying to the famishing *Gilles*, through the bars of his damp dungeon, the coarse bread which she spared from her own frugal meal, and she continued every day to divide with the wretched man her black bread, and to convey to him a pitcher of water by night.

The assassins, not having heard the cries

of the ill-fated *Gilles* for some time, believed him dead, and opened his dungeon; but what must have been their astonishment when, instead of the corpse they expected to see, they found their victim still alive! Without seeking for an explanation of so unlooked for a circumstance, they resolved to despatch him by poison; but the quantity administered not proving sufficiently powerful, it had no other effect than that of producing excessive debility on their victim, who, perceiving that his death was near, asked his gaolers, as a favour, to procure for him the consolations of religion, which they inhumanly refused. *Gilles*, in his despair, had recourse to his friendly maiden who still continued her usual visits to him, and stated his anxiety to see a priest: she had the happiness of procuring for him a Franciscan friar, who following her in the dead of night, and descending with her into the fosse, shrived the prince through the bars of his prison.

When he was asked to pardon his brother Francis, the 'natural man' prevailed, and he refused to do so. "No, holy father," said the prince, "no, this is not in my

" power : I shall accuse this inhuman rela-
 " tive; I shall summon him before his judge
 " and mine; I charge you, I adjure you,
 " O father, when I shall be no more,
 " to inform my unnatural brother of the
 " horrible state in which you have found
 " me, and to tell him from me, that his
 " cruelty has been the sole cause of it;
 " acquaint him with all the agonies I
 " have endured, and especially with the
 " misery which I now suffer at his hands.
 " I shall wait for him before the judgment
 " seat of God; I cite him to appear there
 " forty days after my death; and God com-
 " mands you, holy father, to give him
 " notice of this appeal!!"

The last words were scarcely uttered,
 when a heavy groan informed the monk
 that the prince had fallen back in his cell.
 He called him, several times, in a low
 voice, but in vain, — all was silent; per-
 ceiving that the day began to dawn, the
 monk hastened to regain his convent; when
 arrived there, he prostrated himself before
 the altar in prayer.

The assassins calculating upon the effect
 of the poison, entered the dungeon of the
 unfortunate *Gilles*, at the dawn of the ensuing

day, when, to their astonishment, they found him upon his truckle bed, still alive. To put an end to his sufferings, they twisted a napkin round his neck and strangled him, — no difficult task, for he was so nearly dead, that he could be only said to breathe.

It was so contrived that the news of the death of *Gilles* reached the duke of Brittany, at the moment, when the town of *Avranches*, which he had besieged, capitulated. The report of the prisoner's death occasioned great dissatisfaction among the soldiers, for though no one knew the exact details of the atrocious case, all believed that the duke was no stranger to them; yet, in the joy of victory, on taking *Avranches*, the Bretons forgot the crime of their leader.

Francis however, counterfeited great sorrow for the death of his brother, and ordered a grand mass to his memory in the church of *Mont Saint-Michel*. On the following day, the troops were again on their march homewards: as they crossed the sands so frequently alluded to, they were at some distance from the duke, who was in the rear, accompanied

by only a small number of servants. He appeared melancholy,—perhaps was thinking of the murder he had perpetrated. A Franciscan monk had placed himself upon a small grassy hillock, on the sands, near the road by which the duke was obliged to pass. When Francis was at the foot of the elevation, the monk turning back his cowl, exposed his face, and addressed him in the following words: “ My Lord, I have something of the greatest importance to say, and that which concerns you alone.” — “ Speak, holy father,” replied the duke—taking off his helmet, that he might hear him better, and making a sign for him to follow him to a little distance,— “ Are you from *Mont Saint-Michel* ? ” He then added: “ have I forgotten something or some ” affair of yours ? I have given twenty ” crowns to the altar of the Virgin ; and ” to you I..... ” — “ It neither concerns me nor this world, *Monseigneur* ” interrupted the monk. — Then in a stern voice he said: “ Francis my lord, duke of Brit- ” tany, I heard the confession of *Monseigneur* ” *Gilles*, your brother, — a few days pre- ” viously to his death, — in which he char- ” ged me to cite you, through my voice,

" to appear forty days after his death ,
 " before God , to answer at his tribunal for
 " the unjust treatment he had already en-
 " dured , and the terrible death he was
 " about to suffer , through your means. I
 " now deliver to you the charge that he
 " who is dead enjoined to me , which ,
 " as a minister of God , I was bound to
 " receive. I warn and advise you to
 " think upon this matter , and most ear-
 " nestly and devoutly do I pray that God
 " may have pity and mercy on you. *Francis,*
duke of Brittany, I summon you in the
name of Gilles your brother , who was
basely murdered , to the tribunal of God.—
 " I SUMMON YOU! — I SUMMON YOU! — I SUMMON
 " YOU ! "

The monk replaced his cowl and departed.

The agitated and humbled duke was attacked on the same evening by an inflammatory fever , and , exactly before the expiration of the forty days , exhausted , by disease and remorse , he was on his death bed '.

[†] See *Hist. de Bretagne* by Charles Taillandier , vol. 2 , p. 34. — *Boudent-Godelinière , Notice Historique.*

To return to our dry details, when *Jolivet* quitted the monastery, the monks elected for his successor *Jean Gounault*; but *Louis d'Estouteville*, who had so bravely repulsed the English, had sufficient interest, with the king and the pope, to have this rich abbey presented to his brother, cardinal *Guillaume d'Estouteville*, who was the first abbot *commendatgire*¹.

This was a new but fatal era to the monastery, — for the abbots *commenda-taires*, always absent from their abbey, had no interest in it, excepting that of receiving the immense revenues², which they exacted so rigidly as to disallow, even the least deduction for repairs.

It is however but just to *Guillaume d'Estouteville*, to state, that he was an honorable exception, for he commenced the rebuilding of the choir, which had been in ruins since it fell in 1421³. — The

¹ Commendatory, one who holds a living in commendam.

² According to the *Géographie de Normandie*, vol. 1. This abbey had, so late as 1709, 40,000 liv. rent.

³ *Neustria Pia*, *Gallia Christiana*, MSS. of Thomas Le Roy.

works which he commenced were so magnificent, that, says *Dom Huynes*, "if they had continued, this church would have been the most beautiful in *France*." — When he visited his abbey for the first and last time, in 1452, the expenses of the works which had been proceeding for six years, appeared to him so very exorbitant that he suspended them.

The edifice consequently remained in an imperfect state. The pillars of the circumference, forming the lower sides, were only raised as high as the chapels.

Guillaume d'Estouteville died at *Rome* in 1492, bequeathing immense wealth¹. His successor *André Laure*, a regular abbot who lived until the year 1500, glazed all the windows of the chapels and of the church with rich painted glass², of which

¹ Ce grand homme devint le doyen du sacré collège, et Philelphe l'appelle *columna et columnen S. Romanæ Ecclesiæ*. *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 177.

La mort du cardinal d'Estouteville arrêta les travaux du nouveau chœur. Ces travaux languirent sous son successeur, et ce ne fut qu'en 1521 qu'ils furent achevés. *M. de Clinchamp, Essai Archéologique*.

² Qui fit peindre sur les vitres des chapelles bâties par le cardinal, ses armes, l'histoire de la

scarcely a particle is now remaining, nor even of that which was put in at a later period by *Jean de Lamps*.

Guillaume de Lamps, the successor of *André Laure*, and 34th abbot, raised the pillars¹ which *d'Estouteville* had left unfinished, to the second tier of windows; completed the outer pillars and galleries, with their railings upon the chapels; he also constructed the stair case — still remaining — which conducts from the *corps-de-garde* to the church; but the improvements, to which he sacrificed the whole of his revenues, did not end here, for he built what is termed the *corps-de-logis*, and effected a communication between it and the church, by throwing a bridge over the grand stair case: he also formed the large cistern, and repaired some serious injuries which the nave and cloister had sustained from lightning, the year before his death, which took place in 1510².

fondation de l'abbaye, et le sacre des rois de France.
L'abbé Desroches, vol. 2, p. 178.

¹ *Neustria Pia*, *Gallia Christiana*.

² See *MS. Dom Huynes* which has furnished us with these particulars.

Two of his brothers were then monks of the abbey, and one of them — *Jean de Lamps* — was elected abbot. This individual who was the last of the regular abbots completed the choir and ornamented its windows with very beautifully painted glass. This magnificent choir, which was completed in 1541 (observes *M. de Gerville*), was the latest remarkable construction on *Mont Saint-Michel*.

A great part of the monastery was again consumed by fire in 1564¹, and five years having elapsed without even preparations for repairs, the monks applied for, and obtained a decree from the parliament, at *Rouen*, to compel *François Leroux*, the abbot, to have some works executed. Dissatisfied with the decree, this ecclesiastic exchanged his abbey for that of *Saint-Melaine* in the *diocèse* of *Rennes*, with *Arthur de Cossé*, bishop of *Coutances*², who

¹ *Arsit ejus tempore 7 junii anni 1564 monasterium, ad ejus damna resarcienda anno 1569 parliamenti Rotomagensis decreto damnatus, Franciscus Leroux permutavit cum sequenti (Arturus de Cossé) commutatorio sancti Melanii Redomensis anno 1570. Gallia Christiana, vol. XI, p. 531.*

² *Dom Huynes* paints the character of this man in

displayed no more zeal for the renovation of this monastery than his predecessor had manifested '.

As if the disasters already mentioned had not been sufficient to desolate this celebrated monastery, a new scourge came upon it.

Every thing seems to have conspired against the existence of this beautiful building, but an indefatigable zeal struggled for its preservation; and, as if by a special protection, it always rose from its ashes, more grand and magnificent than before its combustion.

The particular scourge to which we now allude is the civil war with the Huguenots. During the fury of those times the place suffered greatly from unexpected and hostile irruptions, which, notwithstanding the ties of blood and friendship, the identity of language and proximity of abode, too fatally favoured.

We are not writing a history of the re-

the blackest colours, whilst *Rouault*, in his lives of the bishops of *Coutances*, speaks highly in his praise.

' *Dom Huynes*, p. 68.

formation, yet from its immediate connexion with the subject of our work, it is necessary to enter into some local circumstances respecting it. The reformers (A. D. 1558) as a party began to influence not only the nation, and the parliament, but the intrigues of the court itself.

From the year 1562 to the reign of Henry III inclusive, more than fourteen thousand persons were massacred in the diocese of *Avranches* alone¹.

At the head of the protestant party was *Gabriel de Lorges*, count of *Montgommery*², who had caused the death of Henry II at a tournament in 1559. On that occasion the king had persuaded *Montgommery* to break a lance with him³; they tilted in due form; their lances were shi-

¹ 27 years. *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 209.

² His father had bought the county of that name. — *Gabriel* was born at *Pontorson* and he married *Elisabeth de La Touche*. The knights of *Lorges* had an old castle at *Ducey*, the ruins of which served to build the one which is now standing. They had also a noble mansion at *Pontorson*, where they frequently resided. (See *Chartrier de M. le vicomte de Guillon*.)

³ *D'Aubigné*.

vered in the shock, and a splinter penetrating the king's vizor, inflicted a deep wound over his left eye. He was immediately carried to his palace, where he lingered for twelve days, and expired the 10th of July 1559.

Montgomery, the innocent cause of this disaster, thought it prudent to abscond, and being most unrelentingly pursued as an assassin by the cruel *Catherine de Médicis*, he placed himself for security at the head of the calvinistic party, of which he became the main support.

There is scarcely a family of any importance in the diocese of *Avranches*, which has not some traditions and historical proofs of the various cruelties and incendiaries committed by him and his party.

Montgomery had all the gold and silver plate which he had pillaged, from the cathedral of *Avranches* and other churches in the diocese conveyed to *Mont Tombelène*, which belonged to him¹, where, to supply the immediate necessities of his troops, he converted it into gold and silver coins.

¹ *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 211.

Not many years ago an ingot of gold and some pieces of money of his coining were found on the Island¹.

While the war of the league was raging, and when cardinal *François de Joyeuse* was abbot of the monastery of *Mont Saint-Michel*, some protestants, in the summer of 1577, tried to take possession of it by the following stratagem².

Twenty nine men, disguised as pilgrims, but armed with poignards and concealed fire arms, obtained admission into the place, took possession and remained masters of it, during twenty-four hours. They killed some monks, disarmed the soldiers and stabbed one of the centinels on guard, who preferred death to the surrender of his sword. *M. de Vicques*, lieutenant of *comte de Matignon*, the catholic chief, arrived the next day, with a few followers, before the rock, and retook the fortress by a capitulation, which allowed the temporary occupiers to retire³.

¹ *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 2, p. 211.

² MS. of *Jean Huynes*.

³ *Thomas Le Roy* relates the same event.

For this, *René de Batarnay*, the commanding officer who had thus surrendered, was deposed by Henry III, and the *sieur de Vicques* made governor of the fortress in his place; he was the first individual who bore that title.

Masseville does not relate the circumstances of this exploit of *Dutouchet* in the same way, and he says that it happened in 1575. The following is his version of it.

Captain *Dutouchet*, a gentleman who lived with *Domfront*, engaged thirty calvinists to disguise themselves as pilgrims, to obtain an entrance into the fortifications, promising to join them with a strong force soon afterwards. They selected for this *coup-de-main* Madelaine's day, knowing that most of the inhabitants of the place would go in procession to a neighbouring parish, on that day. Arrived at the rock, they were joyfully received by the monks, who anticipated a rich harvest from the offerings of so large a company. On entering, they left (as the regulations of the place required) all their apparent arms, with the *corps-de-garde*. They ascended to the castle: then went into

the church, where they sung their psalms and prayed their prayers; and, when it was time to exhibit the presents which they intended for *Monseigneur Saint Michel*, they produced an article admirably adapted for an offering to the "first knight". Each man drew his sword from under his cloak, and flashed it in the eyes of the astonished monks, seized *Precontant*, the governor of the place, and killed the monks and priest who had said mass for them.

In the mean time the inhabitants who were in the *corps-de-garde*, of the outer gate, near the beach, perceiving *Dutouchet* coming full gallop, with a troop of well armed knights, closed the door so that *Dutouchet* was obliged to retire and leave his accomplices shut up in the castle, without the probability of escape. *De Vicques*, without loss of time, went in great haste to *Avranches*, where he assembled a few gentlemen and some companies of infantry, which he conducted to the island. The thirty adventurers, who were in the castle, seeing that they were with-

* The archangel himself.

out hope of succour, were compelled to surrender. Three gentlemen who were amongst them were beheaded, and nearly all the rest were hung, because they had undertaken this foolish enterprise, without the orders of their general, the prince of *Condé*.

On the 5th of December 1589, during vespers, shortly after the death of Henry III¹, the huguenots of *Pontorson* and its environs, headed by *Montgommery de Lorges*², surprised, says the annalist³, the town of *Mont Saint-Michel*, and, during the four days in which they had possession of it, they pillaged and ill treated all the inhabitants; but as soon as *de Vicques*, who was absent, received intelligence of what had happened, he returned with all the haste possible, and entering

¹ Henry died August 2, 1589. Henry of *Bourbon* was summoned to the dying monarch who declared him his successor; but warned him that he could never reign over France unless he abandoned the creed of *Calvin*.

² Was the son of the great captain who was beheaded in 1574.

³ *Chartrier de M. de Guilon*.

by ways unknown to the enemy, so surprised his new guests, that they retreated, without striking a blow, to *Pontorson*, which still held out for the league.

In the year 1590, *de Vicques* was killed at the siege of *Pontorson*, whilst fighting, says the same writer, in the cause of the church of God. The *duc de Mercœur* appointed *Boissusé* as his successor.

This governor, continues *M. de Guillon*, signalized his entrance into office by a singular destruction of a numerous band of huguenots.

“ On Michaelmas day A. D. 1591, depending upon the word of a soldier of the garrison whom they had corrupted, the knights of *Sourdeval*, *Chaseguey*, *Montgomery*¹, and other protestant chiefs, in the dead of night, headed a considerable troop to surprise the place. The time seemed favourable to the undertaking, the air being

¹ A son of that *Montgomery* who had caused the death of Henry II. The father was taken prisoner at *Domfront* and condemned to lose his head upon the scaffold by that “she-wolf of France” *Catherine de Médicis*.

charged with such dense vapours and thick fogs, that they arrived without being seen. On the north side of the rock there was a small opening, like a trap door, (through which the monks used to introduce certain provisions) so little that it was hardly reckoned among the weak points of the fortification, and a single man was trusted with the safe-guard of it. This individual tempted under particular circumstances stated below¹, had arranged with the assailants that, when on duty there, he would betray the place to them; the means were then agreed upon, viz, that the soldiers should be drawn up in the night by the machine with which the monks raised up the provisions for the place; and the monastery would undoubtedly have been taken, if the soldier had not repented,

¹ Ceux de ce lieu qui tombaient entre leurs mains, étaient sur-le-champ mis à mort, ou réservés pour le gibet. Un jour, ayant pris un des soldats de la garnison, et lui ayant mis le couteau à la gorge, ils lui dirent que, s'il voulait sauver sa vie, il promit de leur livrer cette abbaye, et que de plus ils lui donneraient bonne somme d'argent. Ce pauvre homme, se voyant si proche de la mort, accepta l'offre et toucha 200 écus. See *l'abbé Desroches* and *Chartrier de M. de Guiron*.

and told all that had passed to the governor, who pardoned him and ordered him to perform what he had promised. — *Montgomery* crept along the desert sands with his adherents and stood under the trap door. The governor, exhibited the signal light above, as agreed upon, and in a little while the tackle came slowly down, swinging to and fro in the night wind, and at length reached the bottom. The man, selected to lead the forlorn hope, clasped his legs round the iron cleek; the friend above no sooner felt the weight upon the line than he drew him up, and *Montgomery* and his men saw, with intense anxiety, their companion mount into the air and disappear within.

“The cleeks again rattled upon the ground; — the second man ascended — the third — the twentieth — the fiftieth. — The ninety-eighth — and there was no warlike sound! — still the rope descended and the cleeks rattled on the ground: *Montgomery* began to fear for the success of his enterprise.

”Wishing to know what had been the fate of his men, a long spar of timber was placed upright against the rock, with a block and cord which the assailants had with

them, firmly attached to it. Then *Montgomery* caused his page, in whom he had the greatest confidence, to be drawn up.

"The spectacle which met the eyes of the youth appeared, for several minutes, to have the effect of enchantment, both upon his heart and limbs. He hung there, helpless and alone, without a single idea either of advance or retreat entering into his mind: a kind of stupefaction came over him, and at one time he seriously believed that he was in a dream. By the light of a torch within, he saw that the narrow stair like place into which he looked was discharging a stream of blood into an abyss below, where he could distinguish, in the midst of the obscurity, an irregular mass of human heads and headless bodies. Opposite to him stood a man with arms bared to the shoulder, whose ferocious yet stupid glare, fixed upon an immense sword which he wielded with both hands, made his skin creep. The silence of the place, only interrupted by the splashing of the blood as it fell from step to step, — the red wavering light, which gave a phantasmagoric appearance to the whole scene — and the terrific form of the headsman, who looked like a demon,

— all had such an effect upon his imagination that, when three other figures appeared, with the suddenness and silence of spiritual beings, he imagined for a moment that he beheld only the creation of a disordered brain.

"One of the three figures, however, was his own comrade, whom he had seen but a few minutes before drawn up into this den of blood by the wretch whom *Montgomery* had imagined to be his friend. His arms were pinioned, and his mouth gagged. When they reached the executioner, his two conductors bent him down, without a word, upon a block of stone, and, in an instant, his head bounded down the steps. Another victim was brought up in the same manner, and shared the same fate, — another, — and another, — the ninety-eighth man!! ' — A cry of unrestrained agony burst from the heart and horror stricken lips of the spectator, which startled the group of assassins while his friends below, lowered

' Et ils mirent ainsi à mort jusqu'au nombre de quatre-vingt-dix-huit, dont quarante-deux de Pontorson. *Chartrier de M. de Guiton ; l'abbé Desroches.*

him from his terrible position, with the speed of lightning.

"As *Montgomery* retired with the remainder of his party, in rage and dismay, they heard a shout of hoarse laughter from the ramparts, mingling with the sounds of the night wind, as it moaned along the waste¹."

We still see, on the north side, this opening, and it is called *la Porte de Montgomery*.

In June following, the protestants of *Pontorson* made another unsuccessful midnight attempt at a surprise².

As the well secured garrison had been proof against capture in that way, a numerous body of protestants (in 1594) with a captain named *Courtils*³ at their head, attacked it openly. Through a breach which they effected by a mine they entered the town; but were repulsed, after their captain had

¹ *L'abbé Desroches, Histoire du Mont Saint-Michel; Huynes, MS. n° 22; Cousin, MSS.; Chartrier de M. de Guilon; Gallia Christiana; Neustria Pia; Travelling sketches on the sea-coasts of France, by Leitch Ritchie, esq.*

² See *Chartrier de M. de Guilon*.

³ *L'abbé Desroches*.

been wounded or killed by a shot from an arquebuse.

In 1592, the governor *Boissusé*, in consequence of some complaints which the monks had made of his administration, was replaced by order of the *duc de Mercœur*, who then appointed *Chesnaye-Vaulovel*¹, in his place.

Boissusé, irritated at the conduct of the monks, threw himself into the protestant party, and, determining on revenge, assembled a considerable body of men in the environs of *Pontorson*, on the 27th of September 1595, and set out to surprise the fortress. He was in some measure successful, for he took possession of the town, which he pillaged, and, forgetting that he before had been the protector and defender of the inhabitants, put all of them to fire and sword: the castle however, his grand object, defied his assault, and he was obliged to retreat, leaving a great number of his men slain.

We shall mention only one more attack on this celebrated fortress, which will shew the reader that in those times the victo-

¹ *Chartrier de M. de Guillon.*

rious did not deny themselves, the luxury of revenge.

This attack was made on the 23^d of may 1596¹ by the marquis *de Belle-Isle*, "who had left the party of the league, and attached himself to the king, in the hope of obtaining the baton of a marshal of France. To the application of his friends Henry iv answered coldly : "let him be satisfied with my good graces, I owe nothing to those who bring me nothing." *Belle-Isle* understood the reply, and determined that his first gift should be the fortress of *Saint-Michel*, then governed by *Latouche de Kerolent*, an old friend and comrade of his own."

Accompanied by a band of resolute men (500, according to *Davila*), he crossed the sands with the ostensible purpose of visiting the governor. They were admitted within the walls without hesitation, and the last gate of the castle was opened for his reception; but the guard, on his asserting the right of the whole of his suite to enter with him, refused. *Belle-Isle* on the

¹ *Chartrier de M. de Guilon; MS. de Jean Huynes; MS. of Cousin, etc.*

instant drew his sword, killed the serjeant and corporal on duty, forced the post and rushed with all his men into the middle of the abbey.

The soldiers and servants within, alarmed by the clash of arms, repaired to the place; the assailants, however, succeeded in driving the defenders from post to post, even though the monks themselves joined in the combat. *Latouche* fought like a madman, though not so much for his fortress, as for revenge on his false friend: — When all was hopeless, and he himself was covered with wounds, he determined to die in the effort. He entered once more into the midst of the combatants, succeeded in clearing a way to his enemy, and the two former comrades engaged hand to hand. *Belle-Isle* was slain by a pistol-shot fired by the *valet-de-chambre* of the governor, and the party of the assailants panic struck on finding themselves without a chief, took to flight.

The spot where *Belle-Isle* fell, and the window through which the shot which killed him was fired, are pointed out to the visitor.

Masseville relates this affair differently. He says that the governor's name was *Cair-*

martin, and that out of respect to the title of marquis, he allowed *Belle-Isle* to enter, but that, as soon as he (*Belle-Isle*) had passed the gate, the serjeant of the guard closed it, and shut out his numerous followers. The marquis insisted on their being allowed to enter; the serjeant was firm in his refusal, and, at length, the former exclaiming loudly against the want of respect manifested towards him, drew his sword and ran it through the body of the serjeant. *Cairmartin* then on the instant slew the marquis, and thus terminated the enterprise.

Masseville adds that *Antoinette d'Orléans*, daughter of the *duc de Longueville*, and widow of the marquis, bribed a soldier to kill *Cairmartin*, which he found an opportunity of doing: the soldier was afterwards taken by the *grand-prévost* of Normandy, and hung, in spite of the most earnest solicitations of the friends of the marquis¹.

Two years afterwards, the protestants of *Pontorson*, nothing disheartened, made an-

¹ The marquis *de Belle-Isle* whose name was *Charles de Gondi*, came to France with *Catherine of Médicis*. He was a son of *maréchal de Retz*.

other unsuccessful attempt to surprise this place. — But as it would fatigue the reader to attend to any more details of this description, we will here conclude the military events.

Mont Saint-Michel continued in the occupation of those who were faithful to the league till the duke *de Mercœur* made his peace with Henry IV and surrendered to him in 1598.

Henry taking advantage of the truce (which took place after he had invested *Amiens*) to arrange the preliminaries for the peace of *Vervins*, led an expedition in person against the duke of *Mercœur*, who still held out in Brittany. Intimidated however by the approach of the king, he offered to submit; and proposing to give his daughter and heiress in marriage to Henry's son by *Gabrielle d'Estrées*, he obtained favourable terms. That illegitimate son was *Cæsar*, created duke of *Vendôme*.

Thus Henry succeeded in allaying the internal troubles of his kingdom and satisfying the just desires of the Huguenots, by issuing the famous decree of *Nantes*, by which the reformers were to enjoy freedom of worship in all the towns where their creed then prevailed.

Though we have concluded those military events, which we considered it necessary to relate, we have not yet noticed all the conflagrations on *Mont Saint-Michel*; from the extraordinary number of which, one would be led to suppose that its edifices are doomed, eventually, to perish by the element which has hitherto failed to annihilate them.

In 1594¹ the choir of the church was again struck by lightning, the upper part of which was entirely destroyed, and the bells were melted; but, says an historian², ‘the time for vast and colossal buildings had passed, and the riches and glory of the abbey were lost with the regular abbots.’

François de Joyeuse, abbot commendataire, making no effort to repair the damages (and it was not the want of means which prevented him, for he held several valuable benefices), a parliamentary decree was issued,

¹ In 1594 the lightning fell upon the belfrey; according to the MS. of the learned *Dom Huynes*, page 70, “la pyramide était des plus hautes du royaume.”

² *M. Raoul*, p. 193.

compelling him to restore the three pillars at the entrance of the church and the steeple : in the latter he placed four bells which went by his name¹. At present there is only one, and whether it is one of those four or not, we do not know. In 1776 another fire broke out, which, though but partial did much damage : little trouble was taken to repair the injury occasioned by this conflagration, the effects of which are still plainly visible.

In the period of time which intervened between this and the last fire (which occurred in 1834), we have to notice that great national convulsion which shook the whole of the civilized world : we allude to the revolution of 1793, when the people of France, excited by the insulting airs of superiority, which a domineering aristocracy then assumed towards them, and their exclusion from any participation in the professional appointments and official privileges, which should be free to every member of the social system, violently and abruptly reverted to the first abstract principles of rule, as if there never had been

¹ See *Dom Huynes ; Gallia Christiana*.

laws nor a constitution in France ; and as *Mirabeau* once observed , ‘ overset in one evening what it had taken ages to put together.’

The great state vessel struggled in the storm , and was steered according to the disposition of the pilot , who happened to seize the helm : on the first outbreak of the national tempest, when the mad experiment of substituting human wisdom for divine was tried ; when the laws of God were superseded in a nation’s councils, by the wild and irregular decrees of impious rulers , and crime and anarchy prevailed ; when a mild and generous king with his unoffending family was sacrificed to the rage of an ungodly and infuriated people, it could not have been expected that sacred edifices , churches , priories and abbeys , would have escaped from destruction in the revolutionary vortex , by which every description of property was for a time absorbed.

The archangel Michael , may be said , to have then abandoned his temple at the Mount ; and the place, which religion , history , poetry , and painting , had combined to render celebrated , became a prison for

a crowd of felons and political delinquents, for whose accommodation and employment the nave of the church was converted into work shops.

It was in one of those rooms that the last great fire broke out, the origin of which is not known, though its disastrous effects are but too visible : — it did great injury to the abbey, and it left the town nearly a heap of ashes : — the shops, machinery, and every thing else in the nave were quickly consumed ; and the roof did not escape the fury of the flames ; and had not the garrison, the vicar, the chaplains of the house, and even the prisoners themselves, rivalled each other in ardour and devotion, every perishable material must have been destroyed ; but by their exertions, the most interesting portion of the edifice, — the choir — was saved without injury ; and the *château* and a portion of the town were also preserved by the prompt assistance rendered. It is worthy of remark that not one of the prisoners attempted to make his escape at such a moment of confusion ; every one exerted himself to his utmost, except the inhabitants of the town, who, alarmed by the intensity of the flames,

laboured only to save their own effects.

The French government awarded to *M. l'abbé Lecourt*, one of those who shewed great courage and intrepidity, the decoration of the Legion of Honour ; and to *M. Tencé*, a master lock-smith, of *Avranches*, who was accidentally in the town, a silver medal. Several of the prisoners confined for political offences, were liberated, in consideration of their disinterested and strenuous exertions¹.

No lives, we believe, were destroyed ; but the damage to the buildings and their property was estimated at 41,000 fr. or about 1,640 £; the whole however of what was injured has been fully renewed. Some of the prisoners, not in restraint for political offences, were transferred to *Doullens*, and the number detained on the island has been so reduced since, that the church is set apart exclusively for divine service, except the nave, which is used as a refectory for the prisoners.

Since the revolution the abbey has been used as a prison for the convicts of many

¹ *Boudent-Godelinière, Notice Historique sur le Mont Saint-Michel.*

departments , of whom there have been seven or eight hundred imprisoned at one time'. The government have now established different manufactories there , with the intention of alleviating the misery of the condemned by affording to them occupation , and enabling them to accumulate a sum of money , in order that each individual , on leaving the prison , may have something to supply his immediate wants , and not , as has been too often the case , be dependent upon the charitable portion of the public , for his means of support , until he can find work.

During the reign of terror , the strong castle served as a prison ; and three hundred priests , who from their age and infirmities could not be banished , were shut up in it.

The monastery , as must be supposed , has lost , besides its former importance , most of its wealth , and the first serious diminution of that , may be said to have commenced when its great revenues in England were sequestrated by Henry v and Henry vi.

As we have already shewn by the MSS.

¹ Boudent-Godelinière , *Notice Historique*.

which have reached us, that *Saint Aubert* was the first person who erected — at least upon the summit — a house of worship, we have the same authorities for stating that he first endowed it. After he discovered water of sufficient purity, he established twelve monks to serve the archangel upon the Mount, to whom he assigned considerable revenues, for he presented to them the villages of *Huisnes* and *Genêts* ¹.

It at one period possessed considerable property also in the parish of *Bretteville*; and *Robert de Thorigny*, the abbot, with the other barons of the province, attended a court that Henry II, duke of Normandy, assembled at *Caen*, A. D. 1172, to make a declaration of their aggregate revenues: — *Thorigny* named a number of vassals holding feofs under him at *Bretteville*, for which, he says, he had received homage either at *Mont Saint-Michel* or at his manor of *Bretteville*.

Those estates were given to the abbey by the duchess *Gonnor*, when she was in

¹ *Dom Huynes, MS. n° 22, on Mont Saint-Michel.*

widowhood after the death of Richard I which occurred A. D. 996.

This benefactress, who was of Danish family, contributed large sums for the especial purpose of rebuilding the monastery. "I am much alarmed", said she in one of her charters, signed by *Norgeot* and the *abbé Hildebert*, in favour of this abbey, "for the enormity of my sins, but is it not written that he who gives a glass of cold water in the name of a disciple, shall have eternal recompense?"

The two churches of *Saint-Pierre* and *Notre-Dame* of *Bretteville* were also under the jurisdiction of this abbey, and therefore exempt from paying any fees to the bishop of *Bayeux*, as were also the parishes of *Verson*, *Evrecy* and *Saint-Pair*², of which this monastery had the patronage; but the abbot of *Mont Saint-Michel* was obliged to present, every year, at Christ-

¹ Meorum immensitatem criminum metuens..... tribuatur frigidæ aquæ calix, ut æterna recipiatur merces..... Norgoti episcopi et Heldeberti abbatis.
MS. n° 80.

² MS. n° 80.

mas and Easter, a cake of wax, a pound of incense and a pound of pepper, in acknowledgement that his rank was subordinate to that of the bishop¹.

Richard II, who succeeded Richard I, A. D. 997, and was even more religious than his father, shewed to the monks, on every occasion, the utmost respect, and carried this feeling to such an extreme as to take the lowest seat at table, whenever he eat with them. He presented to the abbey the advowson of *Verson*² and the barony of *Saint-Pair* with all its dependencies.

Robert, who succeeded Richard II, gave to the monks of *Mont Saint-Michel*, *Saint-Jean* on the sea, and all its dependencies, viz *Dragey* and its church, *Poterel*, *Tissé*, *Tisséel*, *Gault*, *Bray*³, *Lande* and *Belleville*⁴,

¹ *L'abbé de La Rue*; *M. Boudent-Godelinière*.

² *Evrecey* was given by *Osborn d'Evresey*.

³ *Brai* ou *Brée* est un village très-ancien, sur une route romaine; on y voit une petite chapelle antique. *L'abbé Desroches*, p. 161.

⁴ *Ego Robertus..... concedo denique in comitatu Abrincatensi villam quæ dicitur sancti Johannis, sitam suprâ mare, cum omnibus ad eam pertinentibus, videlicet Drageium cum ecclesiâ, et Poterel,*

the forest of *Bivie*, and all his rights in the borough of *Beuron*.

In the early part of the 11th century, *Jean*, successor of the celebrated *Guillaume*¹, presented to this abbey some gold and silver vases, a crucifix and two angels in silver², also some relics of *Saint Laurent*, which he had brought from Italy³, and a magnificent chalice upon which were engraven the names of the artist and the donor, with an inscription praying *Saint Michel* to accept the present, and invoking a curse upon the

et Tisseium, et Tisséel, et Goolt, et Obreium, et Landam, et Bellevillam, cum cæteris omnibus, silvam quoque quæ dicitur Bivia, cum silvulis quibusdam aspicientibus ad eam, scilicet Crapout et Neiron, in eodem si quidem comitatu, dono et in perpetuum donatum esse volo in burgo quod appellatur Beurona quidquid in eo mei juris erat. *MS. n° 80.*

¹ Johannem Italiâ, partibus Ravennæ, constituit abbatem. *Chronique de Saint Bénigne de Dijon.*

Johannes Fiscamnensis, post mortem Willelmi, supponem monachum, in monte Sancti Michaelis constituit abbatem. *Annales Bened. de Mabillon*, v. 1, page 336.

² *Annales Bened. de Mabillon*, vol. 4, p. 496.

³ *Annales Bened. de Mabillon*, vol. 4, 386, and *Robert du Mont.*

man who should even attempt to purloin it'. He also gave another chalice upon which were engraven the following words :

“ Hic Domini sanguis nobis sit vita perennis. ”

Edward of England, called the Confessor, also presented to the abbey of *Mont Saint-Michel* while he was in Normandy, a priory with all its lands, castles, and dependencies near the sea;² — but, to particularize or even to enumerate all the priories — churches — villages — castles — forests

¹ Vox evangelici bis bino flumine verbi
Irrigat in quadrum sacro potamine mundum.
Princeps cœligenum Supponis hoc accipe votum
Condere Lambertum calicem jubet arte peritum,
Cœtibus Angelicis statuit quem Suppo fidelis.
Hinc maledictus homo quisquis subtraxeris esto.
Annales de Mabillon and Robert du Mont.

² Carta de sancto Eduardo, rege Anglorum, pro prioratu Sancti Michaelis de Cornubiâ. In nomine sanctæ et individuae Trinitatis, ego Eduardus, Dei gratiâ Anglorum rex, dare volens pretium redemptionis animæ meæ vel parentum meorum..... tradidi sancto Michaeli archangelo in usum fratrum Deo servientium in eodem loco, sanctum Michaellem qui est juxtâ mare, cum omnibus appendiciis villis scilicet, castellis, agris et cæteris attinentibus. *Monasticum anglicum*, vol. 1, p. 551.

— etc., which were granted to this celebrated church, would take up much time in collecting, and would not interest the general reader, for whom these pages are intended. It is sufficient for him to know that it was one of the richest monasteries of its times, and that the gold and silver vessels which it possessed were almost innumerable ; for the faithful had been in the habit of presenting to it from the earliest ages the most costly gifts. It is probable that many of those daring attempts to possess the fortress, during the war of the league, were undertaken more to obtain the treasures contained there than from any other motives.

Its celebrity dates from the earliest periods, and it has been for ages immemorial a consecrated place.

A locality so favourably situated for the mysterious rites of paganism became an appropriate altar for every dynasty of its Gods, but it was no unfit site for a tabernacle even to HIM, “ who dwelleth not in temples made with hands ” : its remote and isolated situation, in the middle of a forest, or of a vast bay, seems to have rendered it peculiarly venerable.

If it was enveloped in mysteries in the time of the Druids, it was no less so in the earlier days of christianity; and while ignorance and superstition prevailed over the land, it was obviously the interest and desire of each succeeding order of priests — pagan and unenlightened christian — to preserve the veil of secrecy and delusion, under which they imposed upon their respective votaries.

It is mainly owing to the agency of superstition, and the fame of the miracles which have been asserted to have taken place upon the Mount, that it has always maintained such an extraordinary reputation. It is to the same causes also that it is indebted for the numerous and illustrious pilgrimages, of which it has for so many ages been the object.

And the imagination can well conceive the exciting effect of processions of pilgrims, chanting on their way thither their spiritual melodies, or singing the merry tunes with light hearts, when the priestly benediction had dismissed them, shrived and sinless: and the ear of Fancy can catch the echoes that repeated the sweet silvery sounds of the flute and the hautboy, as the fishermen's boats filled with pilgrims glided over

the smooth waters of the bay. Those who came from Germany, Italy and many parts of France formed themselves on the journey into a kind of Caravensera, which included entire families from the infant at the breast, to the octogenarian.

Sometimes at the return of Crusaders, a martial scene contrasted with the pacific character. Troops of pilgrims soldiers with their warrior chiefs, were seen to descend the hills, and to approach the holy island with religious purposes. This custom of pilgrimages, it is well known, was continued to the 17th century, and was not entirely abandoned at its close.

One of the earliest and most remarkable was that made soon after the erection of the first church.

The pilgrims came from a country beyond England, where a prince of the name of Elga reigned¹. This country is supposed by some to be Ireland²; but, wherever situated,

¹ Sciant cuncti quod aliàs ultrà Angliam in remotissimâ quâdam regione cui præerat rex Elga nomine. MS. n^o 24.

² Quidam putant ex Hiberniâ. *Neustria Pia*. See also the History of *Mont Saint-Michel*, by *Feuardent*.

it was desolated by a monstrous serpent, which came from the rocks and crawled over the low-lands, ejecting deadly poison which destroyed vegetation wherever it fell, while its pestilential breath infected the air to such a degree as to render the country uninhabitable¹. In this sad extremity, the priests recommended the inhabitants to arm themselves, and march in a body against the pestiferous monster, after passing three days in prayer and fasting, in order that they might propitiate the especial protection of heaven. On the third day of prayer, all the people assembled in arms, and after solemnly recommending themselves to God, marched out of the town, with the priests at their head, and singing psalms, in search of the monster, which they soon found, but under appearances somewhat startling: its mouth, armed with three rows of sharp teeth, was wide open, and besmeared with bloody

¹ Quidam serpens intinuerat immanissimus, flatu et fetore imò nocivus, squamarum testitudine hirsutus, urbis horribiliter arstatus, veneno abundans, arbusta, herbas comburens, hic animalia et homines devastabat, et ipsum aciem anhelitu putido inficiebat. MS. n^o 24.

froth. They valiantly darted their lances at this terrible object, and advanced; — but it lay immoveable, and for a very good reason, — it was dead!! They were astonished at its easy destruction, but their surprise became greater, when, on approaching nearer, they saw between the creature's legs, a square buckler, and a short sword of such a singular shape that they did not even know its use. They fell on their knees, and duly acknowledged the majesty and power of God. While the officiating priest was praying, Saint Michael appeared to him and said: — "I am Saint Michael, always in the presence of the Supreme. I slew the serpent, take the arms to the mount which is consecrated to me." The priest announced the commands of the most High to the people; and four were selected from amongst them, to execute the orders. They were soon on their way to *Mont Gargan*, as they knew no other place consecrated to the archangel. But tho' they apparently moved, they did not advance nearer to the mount (which no doubt astonished them): and, having heard on their road that the archangel had performed great wonders on a mountain

called *Tumba*, they consulted together, and then bent their steps towards this sacred place. When they arrived there, after relating all that had happened, and confirming their story with an oath, they deposited the buckler and sword, upon the altar of the church upon that island¹.

One or two more illustrations of the marvellous, which are said to have happened even so late as the fourteenth century, may not be deemed superfluous, when it is recollected that all Christendom at that time believed those wonders, which the monks thought proper to relate.

A knight, on a pilgrimage to *Mont Saint-Michel*, when on the vast strand which surrounds it, was unexpectedly overtaken by the flowing tide. The waves roared and the winds howled around him; — at one moment he was drawn into the depths of the waters, the next he was moving rapidly along on the top of a high wave; — thus he was tossed to and fro for a whole day. At one time he was off *Pontaubaut*, but all the while invoking the archangel to

¹ MS. no 24, and *Neustria Pia*.

assist him , and implicitly relying on his power : he was at length landed at the foot of the Mount in full life and vigour, though his horse had died in the struggle¹.

Another cavalier, a few years after this, was also overtaken by the sea on the same sands , while on the same errand ; after being tossed by the waves and the currents for some time , he invoked the assistance of Saint Michael, when , as he afterwards declared before the altar of the archangel, he felt as though he was assisted by a thousand men and horses (which had they been really such , could not have aided him there except by a miracle) ; he was shortly after safely landed on the shores at *Saint-Jean-le-Thomas*. In this instance the

¹ Non indevotè à piis mentibus est considerandum de peregrino qui, ferè per septem leucas scilicet de latis propè montem in magno fluxu et accessu pungenti, per mare fuit portatus usque ad locum qui dicitur *Pontaubault* gallicè, et iterum ultrà locum qui dicitur *Tumba Helenæ*, equo suo mortuo, fuit vivus receptus; qui, dùm transiret per antè montem portatus, imò quasi raptus, absorptus, populo audiente à longè, clamabat altà voce: *Saint Michiel, aide*. MS. n° 34.

Ad locum qui de *Pontaubault*..... MS. n° 24.

horse was saved¹, and the high spirited animal carried the knight unflinchingly to the rock.

Jean de la Porte, who died in 1334 (says *MS. n° 34*), was a witness of the above, and numerous other miracles of a similar, and if possible of a more extraordinary nature². — But we shall now proceed to relate pilgrimages better authenticated.

Childebert II, was (according to *Raoul*)

¹ See *MSS. n° 24* and *n° 34*.

² Sanctissimo in Christo Johanni summo pontifici sui humiles oratores religiosi viri conventus monasterii Montis.... pedum oscula beatorum sanctitati vestræ significamus, et simul affirmamus fratrem Johannem de Porta, abbatem nostrum et nostri monasterii, à tempore decem et octo annorum et amplius.... nos et bona benè et fideliter et secundum Deum et regulam nostram rexisse.... bona in statu debito consignasse.... augmentasse, et fuisse et esse religiosum virum et honestum, humilitate, pietate, pace magnum, cordis et corporis munditiâ plenum, et justum, et in tribulationibus et persecutionibus propter justitiam patientem, bonæ vitæ, bonæ famæ et conversationis honestæ, et aliis in spiritualibus et temporalibus Dei gratiâ circumspectus.... millesimo tricentesimo tricesimo tertio, die Martis post festum beati Martini hyemalis.

We have quoted the above to shew the value and importance of the witness.

the first king of France who made a pilgrimage to *Mont Saint-Michel*; — but this is an error, for he could scarcely have done this before there was a church there: this king commenced his reign A. D. 575, and died in 596; and though the historians differ as to the exact date when *Saint Aubert* built his church, the year 708 (more than a century after that king's death) may be assumed as the period; — we have reason to assert that *Childebert III*, who went there A. D. 710, was the first crowned head who bowed before the altar dedicated in that place to the chief of heavenly warriors¹.

Richard II, surnamed the good, fourth duke of Normandy, celebrated his marriage there, with Judith, princess of Brittany, A. D. 1019, with great pomp and solemnity².

¹ Le roi de France, Childebert III, y vint l'an 710. "Ce fut la première tête couronnée qui humilia son front devant l'autel élevé dans ce lieu, sous l'invocation du prince de la milice céleste." MS. of *Mont Saint-Michel* of Thomas Le Roy. — This MS. is only an abridgment of n° 22. *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, page 107.

² Richardus secundus per legatos Judith petiit in connubium. Goiffredus, Britannorum comes, propo-

He laid the foundation, as we have already stated, of a large church, in the place of that which had been destroyed by fire; and, if we believe *Orderic Vital'*, he also ordered strong fortifications to be built.

Edward the confessor, king of England, and grandson of Richard I, third duke of Normandy, appeared there in the pilgrim character.

In 1030, Alain III, duke of Brittany, accompanied by the bishop of *Dol* and many barons, paid their homage. In the year following, Robert of Normandy, called the magnificent, and Alain III, met there to treat on political affairs².

About the year 1102, Robert, called short-thighs, son of William the conque-

situm ejus veroneo animo satagens accelerari, omnibus quæ ad tantum negotium erant congrua præparatis, eam illi deduxit usque ad limina archangeli Michaelis; ibi dux illam competenti honore suscepit, sibique legitimo jure junxit. *Charte de la fondation de l'abbaye de Bernay. — Charter of the foundation of the abbey of Bernay*, lib. II, cap. 13.

¹ Richardus secundus auxit et defensavit cœnobium Sancti Michaelis in periculo maris.

² *Histoire de Bretagne*, by Lobineau, vol. 1.

ror, with his wife Sybille, received the sacrament in the church of *Saint Michel*, on his return from *Palestine*.

A. D. 1108, the monks were favoured with a visit from this duke of Normandy, and his brother Henry, king of England. The latter, says *Maximilien Raoul*, returned to *Mont Saint-Michel* the same year, to make his peace with the king of France, *Louis* the pious; when, says the same author, they were received with great pomp by Saint-Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, and other dignitaries of the church.

There are, as *M. Boudent-Godelinère* observes, two errors in this statement of *Maximilien Raoul*: first, *Louis* the pious (*Louis VII*), also called the young, did not ascend the throne of France till 1137, after the death of his father; consequently he could not have made peace with the king of England in 1108. Again, Thomas of Canterbury was not born till 1117 or 1119, and therefore could not have been at *Mont Saint-Michel* in 1108.

Louis having undertaken to return the visit that Henry II, king of England, had paid him at *Paris*, took the opportunity

of making a pilgrimage to *Mont Saint-Michel* (*en route*), and went there accordingly in 1158. After the ceremony of receiving the sacrament was over, the two sovereigns (for Henry accompanied him), passed a night at the abbey of *Bec*, and visited *Avranches*¹. Henry paid every possible attention to his host; whom he loaded with presents, defraying also all the expenses of the French king and his suite, during the whole journey.

Henry having consolidated in his hands the property of the duchy of Brittany (which he had conquered) by the marriage of his son *Geoffroy* with *Constance*, daughter of *Conan IV*, received the homage of the barons of Brittany, at *Rennes*; — on his return to Normandy, he made another pilgrimage to the Mount; and at the earnest solicitations of the monks dined with them in the refectory: — on his return, after dinner, to the apartment of *Robert de Thorigny*, the abbot, he signed a charter bestowing the churches of *Pontorson* on him and his

¹ *Appendix ad Sigebertum; Chronica Normannia.*

successors, and he at the same time ordered the castle to be rebuilt¹.

In 1172, Henry II again visited the same abbey (whether in the capacity of a pilgrim or not is uncertain), and *Avranches* became the distinguished theatre of an extraordinary scene resulting from the murder of Thomas Becket.

A numerous assembly, by order of the pope, met at the monastery of *Savigny*, whence, together with the pope's legates², they proceeded to *Avranches*³, where the

¹ *Depping; Chronica Normanniæ; Appendix ad Sigebertum; Neustria Pia; Gallia Christiana.*

La garde du château, que le roi (Henri) avait fait reconstruire, fut confiée à l'abbé Robert, qui joignait les talens militaires aux vertus de son état. *L'abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 340.

² Theodvin and Albert. See *l'abbé Desroches*, vol. 1, p. 346.

³ Venerunt Saviniacum, ubi archiepiscopus Rothomagensis et cuncti episcopi et proceres convenerant.... rex ab eis cum indignatione discessit.... in pace ite per terram meam ubi vobis placuerit. *Roger de Hoveden.*

Convenerunt et multæ personæ utriusque ordinis de regno suo. *Annales de Cîteaux.*

Tunc cardinales habito arctiori consilio, revocarunt episcopum Lexoviensem, Joannem pietaviensem et episcopum Saresberiensem, et per eos elaboratum est quod feriâ sextâ sequente rex et cardinales

king, placing his hand upon the bible, declared before all present that he had neither ordered nor wished for the death of his archbishop, which was a subject of as deep grief to him as the loss of either of his parents, had been ' ' yet ' , continued he, ' if you enjoin me a penitential visit to *Jerusalem*, *Rome* or *Saint-Jacques*, I am willing to obey the mandate. '

After this declaration, the monarch presented himself at the door of the cathedral of *Avranches*², and knelt upon a stone, which bearing a rudely carved chalice, without any inscription or ornament, still rests on an open place on the northern extremity of the town, and received absolution: the church doors were then opened

apud Abrincas convenirent. *Roger de Hoveden, Annales de Baronius.*

¹ Addidit etiam ex propria voluntate, quod de morte patris vel matris suæ nunquam tantum doluit. *Roger de Hoveden. Concilia Rothomagensis ecclesiæ, du Père Pommeraye, p. 152.*

² Deduxerunt eum legati ex propria regis voluntate, extra ostium ecclesiæ; ibique, flexis genibus, non tamen exutis vestibus, neque verberibus appositis, absolutus est, et in ecclesiam introductus. *Ex Codice Vaticano.*

by the legates, and the king entered the cathedral amidst all the pageantry and pomp displayed on such occasions.

In the year 1312, Philip the fair made a pilgrimage to the island rock and presented to the abbey what were asserted to be two thorns of the holy crown, and a piece of the true cross; — yet this ruthless monarch destroyed the order of Knights Templars, and ruled so indifferently that murders and assassinations, previously of rare occurrence, became frequent in his reign : it is melancholy to reflect that the cruel and sanguinary spirit of barbarism should have been re-awakened in this reign by the agency of two principles most averse from violence or blood, — namely, those of religion and law.

M. Maximilien Raoul says that about the same time, *madame Thiphaine Raguenel*, daughter of viscount *Bellière*, and wife of *Bertrand Duguesclin*, distinguished for the philosophical turn of her mind, and remarkable for her supposed knowledge of astrology, resided on the island, during her husband's absence in the Spanish war, in a house built expressly for her use. This house stood in the upper part of the town,

and some of its walls were to be seen in the middle of the 17th century' when *Don Huynes* wrote; and it is said that a convent of nuns was subsequently built upon its site, just below the entrance of the *château*.

In 1329, *Louis*, duke of *Bourbon*, presented on his pious visit to the abbey three silver gilt candelabra.

The sanctity and fame of this place, and the temper of the times, induced *Charles VI* to pay his homage there, as he

' "Elle obtint de lui de venir demeurer en ce mont. Il l'y conduisit et lui fit bâtir un beau logis vers le haut de la ville; on en voit encore quelques murailles. Il lui laissa en garde cent mille florins, qu'elle distribua libéralement jusqu'au dernier à plusieurs soldats et capitaines peu fortunés, qui la vinrent visiter en ce mont, en les exhortant d'aller retrouver son mari pour combattre avec lui. Pendant ce temps-là, elle s'exerçait continuellement sur ce roc à la contemplation des astres, à calculer et à dresser des éphémérides, etc. Elle resta en ce lieu jusqu'en l'an 1374, qu'elle alla mourir à Dinan, où l'abbé du Mont Saint-Michel lui fit solennellement ses obsèques, comme elle l'avait désiré". *MS.* n° 22.

This lady also left a *MS.* of her own writing, n° 14 of the collection, it is in vellum and in latin.

was conducting an army from the town of *Le Mans* to inflict a severe punishment on the duke of Brittany and *de Craon*, for the attempted assassination of the brave and unyielding veteran *de Clisson*. But that visit had an unfortunate result to his majesty; for, on his way, the bridle of his horse was seized by a maniac, who suddenly rushed upon him from a covert, and told him he was betrayed; this warning was rendered more superstitiously impressive upon his imagination by the accidental falling of the spear of one of his attendants upon the helmet of another — a sinister omen, — and the alarm occasioned to him, by anticipation of the menaced treachery, so instantaneously disturbed his reason, that he drew his sword, attacked his followers, and killed some of them. They perceived the aberration of his intellects, and, depriving him of his arms, reconducted him to *Paris*. *Charles*, however, had lucid intervals, and thinking that a pilgrimage to the abbey would effect his cure, went there towards the close of the 14th century, but unfortunately without any improvement in his melancholy condition.

Charles VII made a pilgrimage there in 1422, and this act of reverence was justly due to the patron angel, for, when nearly the whole of France was in the power of England; when the king of France had only two towns on his side, — *Orléans* and *Chinon*; two lances, — *Dunois* and *Lahire*; two women, — *Agnès Sorel* and *Jeanne d'Arc*;—*Saint Michel*, the first warrior of the celestial army, remained faithful to him.

The superstitious *Louis XI* appeared there three times as a pilgrim: first, in 1462, again in 1469, to thank the archangel for the protection which he had afforded to France during the preceding wars; and in 1470, in gratitude for the birth of the dauphin. Respecting the second of those pilgrimages, we have with little alteration the following record: — an immense cavalcade appeared upon the sands, robes lined with ermine and velvet caps embroidered with gold, sparkled brilliantly; the white plumes of the knights of France waved in the air; the rich venetian armour glittered, and the variegated caps and mountain plaids of Scotland were seen amongst the throng; the galant coursers pranced upon the sands, so soft and favourable for their motions,

that they moved as if in the riding school, and commingled the foam of their mouths with the briny froth of the sea.

From the midst of this brilliant *cortège*, mounted upon a white charger, full of ardour, and with swelling veins indicating its eastern origin, — advanced *Louis* attired in an humble robe of camlet, and wearing a coarse felt hat; this however was sanctified with a leaden image of the Virgin.

That king repaired the fortifications at his own expense, and gave 600 crowns in gold — at that time a considerable sum, — as an offering to the monastery. And, on his return, he fulfilled the design of *Charles VII.*, by instituting¹ (on the 1st of August 1469) the order of *Saint Michel*²,

¹ Some say at his *château d'Amboise*, others at *Mont Saint-Michel*.

² *Jean d'Estouteville* was the first who received this honour. — “De par Saint Georges et de par Saint Michel, lui dît le roi, en le frappant légèrement sur les épaules avec une épée, je vous fais chevalier.” See *Hist. des Ordres religieux*, par *Heylot*, vol. 8, pages 377, 378, 413, etc.

The preamble of the statute of the order is very curious.

“We, to the glory of God, our almighty creator,

which being at first confined to a small number of dignitaries, was for a long time considered the most noble order of France¹.

and in reverence of the glorious Virgin Mary, and in honour of *Monseigneur Saint-Michel* the archangel, the first knight, who cast down from heaven the enemy of God and of the human race, and who has always in a peculiar manner kept, preserved, and defended, without permitting it to be taken, subdued, or put into the hands of the ancient enemies of our kingdom, his place and oratory, *Mont Saint-Michel*; and, to the end that all good and noble courage be excited and especially moved to every virtuous work, on the 1st day of August, in the year 1469, we have created, instituted, and ordained, and by these presents we do create, institute, and ordain an order of fraternity, or friendly company, of a certain number of knights, amounting to thirty-six, which we desire to be called of the order of *Saint-Michel*." MS. n^o 22.

¹ *Heylot* has preserved the names of the first fifteen knights of the order.

1. Charles son frère, duc de Guienne;
2. Louis de Luxembourg, comte de Saint-Pol et connétable;
3. Jean, duc de Bourbon;
4. André de Leval, qu'on nommait le maréchal de Loheac;
5. Jean de Beuil, comte de Sancerre;
6. Louis de Baumont;
7. Louis d'Estouteville;

Each knight on his installation received from the King a gold collar ornamented with silver shells, and a gold medal, representing the contest of Saint Michael with the Devil (in the form of a dragon) whom he is about to pierce with his lance, under his feet, and bearing this device, *immensi tremor Oceani*¹.

8. Louis de Laval;
9. Louis, bâtard de Bourbon;
10. Antoine de Chabannes, comte de Dammartin;
11. Jean, bâtard d'Armagnac;
12. George de la Trimouille;
13. Gilbert de Chabannes;
14. Charles de Crussol;
15. Tannegui du Châtel, gouverneur du Roussillon.

The articles of this order were sixty in number. See *MS. n° 22*. By the first, the number of knights was fixed at thirty-six; but it was never completed during the reign of *Louis XI*.

Ses ennemis répandaient que, par le moyen de ce collier, il voulait avoir sous sa main tous les grands du royaume, quand ils viendraient au chapitre. *Hist. Ecclésiastique*, vol. 23, p. 301.

¹ The collar of *Saint Michel* which, for a long time, was given only to princes and the chief nobility, afterwards became so general, especially in the time of Henry II and his successors, when it was a reward for all kind of merit, that it was no longer, so to speak, an honorable distinction.

Henry III gave it new and additional importance

The newly installed knight was then informed, that, heresy, treason, cowardice, and flight in combat, would exclude him

by annexing to it the order of *Saint-Esprit*, which he created 1578, "in honour of *Whitsunday*, on which day, at an assembly of the Estates general of Poland, together with those for the duchy of *Lithuania*, he was elected king of Poland; and afterwards upon the same day and feast he was called and accepted as their king."

It was on this account that the knights of the last mentioned order (one of the six orders recognized in France in the reigns of *Louis xviii* and *Charles x*, but which appears to have been abolished by an act of the revolution of 1830, when an established or state religion was no longer recognized), received, previously to their installation, the order of *Saint-Michel*, and in consequence were styled knights of the King's order.

An author remarks that the primary green, golden yellow, blue and white, the colours of the order of *Saint-Esprit*, were the favourite colours of a mistress of Henry iii. The two Ms, which were the initials of her name, and the two letters *phi* and *delta*, tortured into *fidelta*, *fidelité*, were interlaced on the collar of the order. Thus, adds this author, those noble decorations which, in the commencement, were composed of crosses, and only imposed religious duties, afterwards assumed an image of gallantry, bestowed by a debauched sovereign to decorate his complaisant nobles.

To this example we may add that of the highest English order the Garter, instituted by Edward iii,

from the order, by the articles of which he was obliged to pay thirty golden crowns to the treasury, for the purpose of purchasing ornaments for the archangel's church, and at the death of a brother knight, he was to say twenty masses and give six gold crowns in charity ¹.

The chapter or general assembly of the knights of the order was held in the *Salle des Chevaliers*, on the 29th of September, the day on which the *fête* of the archangel is celebrated ².

On the occasion of the last visit, *Louis*

in 1350, if historians relate the circumstances of this creation correctly.

According to some historians, *Louis XIV* increased the number of knights to one hundred; others say on the contrary that the number was much more considerable, and that the order was consequently so debased, that to re-establish it, he — in the year 1665 — cashiered all the knights of the order of *Saint-Michel*, except one hundred, on whom, after they had proved their nobility and services, he conferred the title of knights of the king's order.

¹ See *MS.* n^o 22.

² This custom was continued till the time of *Louis XIV*, who transferred the general assemblies to the *Salle des Cordeliers* at *Paris*. They had also other but less solemn assemblies during the year.

had an interview with Francis II, duke of Brittany, on whom he conferred the collar of this order, himself presiding at the installation¹.

On the eve of the *fête*, the knights with the king attended vespers, clothed in crimson velvet hoods, and long white damask mantles furred with ermine, bordered with gold interwoven with silver shells². The next morning, in the same costume, they attended mass, after which they each, according to their means and devotional impulses, presented oblations,

¹ *Hist. de France*, par du Haillan, p. 1149.

² Guillim, in his *Display of Heraldry*, describes the dress thus.

“ Their habit, as now used, is as followeth : first, doublet, hose, shoes, scabbard, with the band of his cap and feather, white, his surcoat cloth of silver, with the sleeves on; over that, a mantle also of cloth of silver, tied over the right shoulder, and turned up over the left, and bordered about with a rich embroidery of cockles and knots; and, over all, the collar of Saint-Michael.”

“ The reason ”, says the same author, “ that did occasion the king to erect this order, was in memory of an apparition of Saint Michael upon the bridge of *Orléans*, when that city was besieged by the English.”

and returned to the grand Knights' Hall, where they dined in company with the king'. His majesty made several donations to the abbey, and after his return to *Paris* sent a gold medallion of *Saint-Michel* suspended from a gold chain, which he himself, as he stated, had always worn.

We learn from a letter dated *Avranches*, August 1st 1470, and printed in the memoirs of *Philippe de Commines*, that his majesty spent two or three days at *Avranches*, probably with *Jean Boucart*, the bishop, who was his confessor.

Good fortune never crowned king craft more completely than in the instance of *Louis XI*, but the hand of death was at length laid on him, who in his anxiety to avoid it, had made numerous pilgrimages and was unsparing of his vows; it was said that he had recourse "even to earthly aid," and drank blood drawn from the veins "of infants, to revive the failing current" of his own. "This monarch, was the first king of France who bore the title of² most christian.

¹ MS. no 22; *Dom Huynes*.

² It appears certain, says the *Dictionnaire des*

His successor *Charles VIII* (says *Masseville*), left *Avranches* on the 26th of October 1487, and soon arrived as a pilgrim at *Mont-Saint-Michel*, where he sojourned three days, offering gifts, praying, and returning thanks to the angel chief of his order, for the great victory that he had gained over his enemies in Brittany².

The illustrious *Francis I*, visited the abbey, in 1528 and 1532, but rather from curiosity than superstition. He sent the order of *Saint-Michel* to *Henry VIII* of England, who in return honoured *Francis* with that of the Garter.

The cruel and perfidious monster, *Charles IX*, and his brother *Henri*, made a pilgrimage to the Mount, in 1561.

Henry of *Bourbon*, prince of *Condé*, in whom *Richelieu* placed great confidence,

Origines, that *Gregory III* gave the title of *trés-chrétien* to *Charles-Martel*, and *Etienne II* to *Pepin-le-Bref*, but it was not till the pontificate of *Paul II*, A. D. 1469 (therefore in the reign of *Louis XI*), that this title became a set formal expression in the bulls and apostolical letters addressed to the kings of France.

¹ *Jaligny*.

visited it from religious zeal, in the year 1636.

In the same year, *Henri de Sourdis*, archbishop of *Bordeaux*, went there, but being required on his arrival (according to the customary formalities) to surrender his arms, he refused to do so, even for a short time, and immediately retraced his steps¹.

Madame de Sévigné, accompanied by her daughter *madame de Grignan*, also paid her devotions to the holy island, which, in a letter dated, *Dol* May 11th 1689, she entitled the "proud and lofty mount."

We do not learn that *Louis XIV*, *Louis XV*, *Louis XVI*, or *Louis XVIII*, were ever there.

¹ The origin of the custom of being disarmed at the gate was this: the monks received all pilgrims who presented themselves, but for the security of the place, solicited and obtained (we do not know from what king) the right of compelling *all* visitors on entering the sacred walls to resign their arms, even to the little dagger which they carried,—*ut nemo cum armis, ne cultello quidem, castellum ingrederetur. Gallia Christiana.*

This practice at first only prevailed at the fortress (castellum), but was extended to the town, after the abbot *Jolivet* had surrounded it by fortifications.

The count *d'Artois*, afterwards *Charles x*, went there in the pilgrim character, in the year 1777, and the duke *de Chartres*, now king of the French, accompanied by his governor', *madame de Genlis*, a short time before the revolution of 1789, added his name to the list of illustrious visitors.

' Lest all our readers should not be acquainted with the particulars of this title of governor given to *madame de Genlis*, we shall give the explanation of the peculiarity.

The celebrated duke *d'Orléans* (who, in the revolution of 1789, took the absurd name of *Égalité*), father of his majesty the present king of the French, led captive by the irresistible charms of the person and mind of that lady — the daughter of *Ducrest de Saint-Aubin*, — determined on entrusting to her the education of his three sons and his daughter, with the title of *governor*, and for this anomaly he asked and obtained the consent of *Louis xvi*.

It may not be uninteresting to observe, that what first introduced this lady to particular notice, and was consequently the commencement of her good fortune, was her extraordinary capacity for music; the harp was her favourite instrument, on which she played admirably: → her wit and beauty effected the rest.

Her introduction to *M. de Sillery de Genlis* was very singular. — A spirited letter which she wrote to one of her friends, accidentally fell into the hands of *M. de Genlis*, who, on reading it, became suddenly so enamoured of the writer that he demanded

A circumstance then occurred which indicated the benevolent disposition of the future monarch.

In the monastery was formerly one of those dungeon cages, supposed to have been invented by cardinal *Balue* for his infamous master¹, the use of which in the sequel was tried upon himself.

It was constructed of wooden beams (some have asserted that it was of iron), and its dimensions were only ten feet in length and eight in breadth. When the count *d'Artois* saw it in 1777, he ordered it to be destroyed; but his orders were not attended to. When the duke *de Chârtres* (now *Louis-Philippe*) went there, he had it broken up in his own presence (striking the first blow himself²), lest his command

and obtained her hand in marriage, which gave her rank in the world.

At the advanced age of eighty, this lady wrote her memoirs, which are so full of trifles and vanity, that, in spite of numerous anecdotes which are not without interest, the work is very tedious.

¹ *Louis xi.*

² Perhaps it may be interesting to some of our readers to see the account of the destruction of this cage as related by *madame de Genlis*.

should have been disregarded like that of the count *d'Artois*.

Though many individuals have been unquestionably confined in this cage, we shall select only two instances.

Dubourg, the editor of a Dutch-paper, was arested by order of *Louis XIV*, in consequence of his having published some

“ Je questionnai les religieux sur la fameuse cage de fer ; ils m'apprirent qu'elle n'était point de fer, mais de bois, formée avec d'énormes bûches, laissant entre elles des intervalles à jour, de la largeur de trois à quatre doigts. Il y avait environ quinze ans qu'on n'y avait mis de prisonniers à demeure ; car on y en mettait assez souvent (quand ils étaient méchants, me dit-on) pour 24 heures ou deux jours, quoique ce lieu fût horriblement humide et malsain..... Alors Mademoiselle et ses frères se sont écriés qu'ils auraient une joie extrême de la voir détruire. A ces mots, le prieur nous dit qu'il était le mattre de l'anéantir, parce que M. le comte d'Artois (Charles x), ayant passé quelques mois avant nous au Mont Saint-Michel, en avait positivement ordonné la démolition..... Pour y arriver, on était obligé de traverser des souterrains si obscurs, qu'il y fallait des flambeaux ; et, après avoir descendu beaucoup d'escaliers, on parvenait à une affreuse cave, où était l'abominable cage. J'y entrai avec un sentiment d'horreur..... M. le duc de Chartres, avec une force au-dessus de son âge, donna le premier coup de hache à la cage. ”

strictures on the conduct of that king. To relieve the tedium of the many days which he passed in his horrible captivity, he occupied himself in carving figures with a nail, on the bars of his cage. The abbot *Manet* informs us, that the unfortunate man declared, a short time previously to his death (which took place after many years' confinement in this den), that his greatest agony was occasioned by the gnawing of his gouty feet by rats, when he was too feeble to repel them.

That *Louis xv* should furnish us with the other instance is not surprising. He there confined *Desroches*, a wretched rhymist who had ventured to publish some verses against *madame de Pompadour*, a courtesan of sufficient influence, to punish his temerity.

Desroches, more fortunate than *Dubourg*, did not die in his frightful prison, — the humane and unfortunate *Louis xvi* liberated him, and never subjected any one to the same punishment.

Before the revolution of 1793, *Mont Saint-Michel* was kept as a state prison, and many a *lettre de cachet* has condemned its unhappy

victims to oblivion within those walls¹.

At the time of the revolution, when all the prisons were explored by the people, there were only five or six prisoners there², some of whom were maniacs, and those who were not insane were probably placed there from motives of compassion, in order that their concealment might shelter them from public and capital punishments, which would have brought disgrace upon all the members of their families.

The *lettres de cachet* were not used with the same clemency in antecedent times, for all historians agree that cardinal *de Fleury*, though averse from severities, issued from thirty to forty thousand of those letters on account of jansenism, and *Louvois* issued eighty thousand, to suppress protestantism³.

The last pilgrimage took place in 1835. The pilgrims were twenty in number and came from the department of *Orne*, they carried a banner, that had been presented

¹ The *lettre de cachet* is said to have been first introduced by *Thierry* or *Brunchaut*.

² *Boudent-Godelinière, Notice Historique.*

³ *Dictionnaire des Origines.*

to them by *madame de Broglie*, the principal lady of their parish¹.

Having traced our records from the earliest to the present time, we hasten to the conclusion.

The choir is now a cotton manufactory, and those cells in which so many recluses practised the austerities of religion, are now filled with criminals who have outraged every law of religion and morality: — where the pure and elevating strains of sacred melody resounded, the horrifying blasphemies of the profane, or the melancholy expressions of despair are now uttered, tho' in the suppressed tones which a vigilant and coercive superintendence compels.

In the spot where formerly was the gilded statue of the archangel, serving the two fold purpose of a beacon to the mariner

¹ This lady was *madame de Broglie*, the daughter of *madame de Staël*, and a superior woman both in head and understanding; her death is most pathetically lamented by *M. de Lamartine*, in his *Recueils*. The pilgrims walked through *Avranches* singing, and on their way purchased the little work of *Father Feuillant* on *Mont Saint-Michel*, at one of the shops in the town.

at sea, and a signal of hospitality to the traveller by land, there is now a common telegraph; — and where in bye gone days a Friar in his sacerdotal dress and with his simple beads appended to his girdle, stood ready to unfold the mysterious windings of the labyrinth, a jailor now appears with his grey cape and the huge keys of the prison doors suspended from his belt, and emblematical of his office.

But to resume. — The island itself is a rock of granite, which, including the towers on the top, is 378 feet in height, on a base, which occupies a quarter of a league¹ in circumference.

A large dyke, before the entrance gate, traced by the sea in 1822, exposed the end of a causeway, paved with large stones, ten feet below the surface: — this causeway led formerly to the steps of that gate, which, with the gothic spire surmounted by the golden ball upon which the weather vane was placed, will give the difference between the calculations of ancient and modern geometricians respecting the height, — the

¹ The french league is equal to two and a half english miles and five or six yards.

latter making it 378 feet, and the former 400;—if we assume 10 feet for the depth of the sand above the ancient causeway, and allow 12 feet for the remaining portion of the spire, we have the difference—viz, twenty two feet: and the existence of subterranean steps proves that the bay is now much elevated above its original height.

The splendid and diversified view from the northern heights of *Avranches* is indescribably beautiful. The country around is different in its appearance, from any place we have ever seen elsewhere; the pellucid waters of the river *Sée* meandering slowly through meadows and fruitful orchards appear to lose themselves, not in the distant sea, but in the vast *grève* which seems to belong neither to land nor to Ocean. *Châteaux*, churches, spires, villages, farm houses, and patches of ground well cultivated, meet the eye and form a beautiful landscape.

The visitor has a choice of *routes* from *Avranches*, and he who is bold enough to venture without a guide (and from reasons which will be stated, we would dissuade every stranger to the locality, from

doing so) may take either of two routes. One by *Pontorson* (the longest, being about six leagues from *Avranches*, but with only half a league of *grève* to cross), which, while the sand is safe, is clearly defined by carriage wheels and the tracks of men and horses ; or that by *Pontaubault* and *la Rive*, a distance of five leagues. This route is, in our opinion, equally safe, as there are no rivers to pass, and all the sands are firm. If the general road along the shore be taken, through *Gué de l'Épine* to *Courtils*, there is danger from the ever varying quicksands. The distance as a bird flies is only two leagues and a half, but this direct passage is scarcely practicable, from being intersected by the beds of the rivers, and this should not on any account be taken without sure guidance : there is always in this direction the river of *Pontaubault* to be crossed, and, if a tide has altered the course of the *Sée*, as it frequently does, the treacherous bed of the stream conducts to danger.

Permission to inspect the fortress from the *Préfet* is important to the visitor, and, if he be a foreigner, the exhibition of his passport may be necessary.

Going or coming — the traveller, by an inconsiderable *détour*, may examine the numerous salt works along the shore, which at a distance resemble snow white and conical cliffs. These accumulations however are merely the refuse of the manufactories, after the salt has been extracted.

The process, which is very simple and is carried on in the most wretched description of huts by the poorest of the peasantry, is thus effected. The sand is scraped from the *grève* by an instrument called *havelle*, and then taken to some situation near the salt works; when it is not to be used immediately, it is thrown in a heap and covered over with faggots, and a plastering of unctuous clay, to prevent rain from penetrating. When the salt is to be extracted, the sand is placed in a trough, and fresh water is poured upon it, which, as it drains through, carries off the saline particles in solution; and, saturated with them, runs along a neatly constructed channel to a hut where it falls into a tub¹,

¹ To ascertain when the water is sufficiently saturated, they have a very simple instrument, a

from that it is baled into leaden pans, placed over wood fires : the water being evaporated deposits the salt, ready for use, tho' of a dusky hue. The entire operation is primitive, and its scale very insignificant.

At the spring-tides (four days before and after the new and full moon), the waters spread rapidly over the whole area of the *grève*, and rushing with great impetuosity into the beds of the rivers, form a wave called *barre*, or eddy of water, which presents rather a curious appearance¹.

piece of wood, about six inches long and two broad, hollowed out, in which they place two or three little balls of wax, in which there is a small piece of lead, — when they float the solution in the tub is of sufficient strength for evaporation.

¹ In the *Gironde* the *barre* is called *mascaret*, and the Americans name the vast gigantic wave, which enters the Amazon, *proroca*; that body of water is twenty feet high, fills the whole breadth of the channel, and when rushing forward is heard at a considerable distance.

The diminutive *barre* may be heard at *Pontorson*, as soon as it enters the bed of the rivers.

This *barre* is caused by the sudden contraction of the waters on entering the bed of the rivers, that of the *Sée* especially, after being diffused widely over the flat sands of the bay. Elevated from one to three feet, they rush rapidly onward, impelling every thing before them, with resistless force ¹.

The scene then changes, the rock is no longer to the imagination a pyramid in the sandy plain, but a fine symmetrically formed vessel, tho' of colossal size, at anchor in a calm and tranquil harbour of vast extent.

Fatal accidents have frequently occurred on the sands of this bay, from the earliest to the present time. In the tapestry of queen Matilda ² is to be seen an historical

¹ It is a magnificent sight to see the *barre* of the river on a dark night, when the white foam of the wave is clearly seen on the dark brown sand.

² At *Bayeux*. This is a valuable monument of the age of the conquest, giving the arms, costumes and manners of the time with great minuteness. It is not, however, tapestry such as we understand it, but rather a sort of embroidery, in which only the outline of the objects is sketched. This curious specimen of ancient Norman manufacture is a piece of linen cloth, nineteen inches

illustration, in a *cortège* of Norman warriors, who are represented as approaching the rock; — ignorant of the dangers of the locality, some of them, separating from the body of the troops, and venturing upon the deceitful quicksands, are suddenly embarrassed, and would be engulfed in them, but for *Harold*, who endowed with prodigious strength and the proverbial courage of a Norman, rescues them from

broad, and two hundred and ten feet eleven inches long, and forms one entire piece. The extremities are beginning to crumble away. The country people around *Bayeux* familiarly call it the "*toilette* of William the conqueror."

There are several opinions as to who wrought this tapestry: some suppose it to have been the work of Matilda of Flanders, queen of England, duchess of Normandy, and wife of the Conqueror, and her ladies, when William was engaged in his wars; *M. l'abbé de La Rue* and several English antiquarians attribute it to the Empress Matilda, daughter of Henry I. *M. Delaunay* is of opinion that it is not a female production, on account of the many indecent emblems in the border of the tapestry, and he ascribes it to bishop Odo; and *M. Le Prévost* inclines to the same opinion, and believes that it was intended to ornament the church of *Bayeux*.

For further particulars, see the *Appendix* to Duncan's dukes of Normandy, or vol. 8 of *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*.

their impending fate'. On account of the treacherous nature of these sands, the journey across them is really very dangerous without a guide, unless the routes by *Pontorson* or *la Rive* be taken, which avoid the rivers that occasion the absorbing properties of the *grève*.

The other routes are exceedingly hazardous from the spongy and shifting nature of the sands, which are of immense and unascertained depth². They are frequently

¹ Et dux trahebat eos de arenâ. — But the tapestry seems to indicate that many lost their lives on this occasion, for, on the skirt of the lower border, we remark a dead man extended on the bank of the river.

² *M. Blondel* says that in 1780 an experiment was tried on the substance of the *grève*, by placing upon it, near the firm land, a piece of granite, in the form of a cone, weighing three hundred pounds, secured to a rope forty feet in length. In a single night the stone disappeared, and could never afterwards be recovered.

This experiment, continues the same author, is the more interesting, because it was made in consequence of a ship having run aground near *Mont Saint-Michel*, which sunk so fast that her whole hull disappeared before any goods could be saved. Workmen, however, were despatched, who cleared their way, and succeeded in drawing out

covered by the sea, and always furrowed by many rivers and small streams, whose beds change almost every spring tide, the result of which is, that smooth and deceptive beds, called by the country people *lises*, are formed, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another, which spots, though firm in appearance, are so soft that the traveller who does not distinguish them, disappears in a very short time, unless promptly assisted; and if he be mounted on horseback, he and his horse sink to rise no more. Those who fall into those quicksands, in vain may hope for effectual assistance; the exertions to escape and the movements occasioned in the fluid mass, by the tramping of feet, render the sand softer, and it the more speedily engulphs the victim.

The sand is so much saturated with water, that even a light person trampling for a short time on those parts

some packages from her hold. The sea, in the mean time, returned unobserved through the treacherous sands, and swallowed up men, goods and ship. Her very masts sunk, so that no traces were left to indicate the place where the disaster occurred.

which appear to have consistency, will render them soft and fluid, and, if these movements be continued long, the imprudent individual may lose his life : this applies however only to the *lises* or smooth sands, in which the work of death is but the affair of a few seconds ; for on the *tangue* or firm sand, the danger is comparatively little ; yet the guides, in crossing the rivers from *Genêts* to *Tombellène*, or from *Gué-de-l'Épine* to *Courtils*, with passengers in carts, are always unwilling to rest long upon the firm sand in the rivers or on the margins ; they drive as *rapidly* across, as the horse can move thro', with a load, and water up to his hocks.

There have been however many more victims to the advancing tide than to the quicksands ; the visitor therefore ought to be well informed as to the exact time when the tide will flow : the inhabitants very willingly give this information ; but it must be borne in mind that the wind may hasten or retard the influx half an hour, or that an accident may happen to the carriage, the horse or the traveller himself, so that he may be delayed for an unexpected yet fatal period. In all these cases he runs

some risk ; and it but too frequently happens, that he sees his danger when it is too late to escape from it, for the tide is no sooner seen that it arrives ; it first enters the rivers, and tho' one might suppose that a man running at the top of his speed would arrive on *terra firma* before it could overtake him, or at least contemporaneously with it, the reality is not so, for the sands are full of hollow places and small channels, which the sea enters at the same time that it is following the course of the rivers ; so that the unfortunate traveller, without suspecting it, suddenly finds himself surrounded by water : in many such instances life has been lost ; many have been surprized in this way, and persons on the rock, who have seen them struggling with the waves and heard their cries for help, have been unable to render them the least assistance.

The following most distressing calamity occurred from the unexpected influx of the tide in 1839.

M^{lle} Lemazurier, a young lady of respectable connexions at *Vains*, and on the eve of marriage,—accompanied by a friend and the two dress-makers who were preparing her

wedding clothes, went to bathe, on the sands near *Vains*, which is on the shore of the bay; while they were in the water, the tide rushed in and swept them away: the bodies were found a few days afterwards.

The mother of *M^{lle} Lemazurier* had the misery of witnessing the horrifying death of this her only daughter, who is represented to have been a singularly beautiful person; the parent in her agony wandered on the margin of the shore day and night until the corpse was found.

It sometimes happens too, that in the finest weather imaginable, a fog descends suddenly upon the sands; no situation then can be conceived of greater terror, for the person who is caught there can perceive neither skies, banks, hills nor rivers; in short, he finds himself in an atmosphere so dense that he can not see objects two feet before him; yet he must proceed, for if he stands still, the returning tide may drown him in the quicksands, and if he advances, it may be only to anticipate his destruction. He may consider himself highly favoured by Providence if he reaches the dry land. In such difficulties the inhabitants

are directed by the sound of bells, for, as soon as the fog is observed, a chapel bell is heard from one of the villages on the shore — and then another — and another — to indicate the relative positions. Regular guides therefore are indispensable to the stranger.

The few hundred inhabitants (about three hundred) of the town are mostly employed in fishing, as are also many of those who live on the shores of the bay, very few of whom are cultivators of the adjacent soil: a few *aubergistes* and shopkeepers who deal in medals and scarfs for the pilgrims, constitute the remaining portion of the population.

The fish of the place, except turbot, sole and salmon (which, we believe, are very rarely caught there in abundance), are not much esteemed; but the *grèves* are fertile in large cockles, by the sale of which the inhabitants derive a yearly income of from 15,000 to 20,000 fr.

In searching for these, which are found in the sands at low water, — where small holes upon the surface indicate their position, — women and children traverse the sands at all seasons of the year, with naked

feet, and follow the waters of the ebbing tide over the slippery and treacherous sand with surprising intrepidity; when they observe cockle beds, which they know directly, they scrape the sand, underneath which they find the fish.

Occasionally, at the equinoxes, when the tide rises higher than usual, that singular species of fish, called the sea devil, is left upon the *grèves*.

The fishery, and manufacture of salt, being matters of commerce, bring the inhabitants of this portion of the *arrondissement*, of *la Manche*, into communication with many other people, by which intercourse their intellectual faculties have been so much developed that they are said to be far more intelligent than the natives of some other parts of the district.

Their costume, and physical conformation, as to the lower extremities, are remarkable; the tucked up petticoats exhibit legs which, with few exceptions, are as thick at the ankle as at the knee¹. Instead

¹ In consequence of the sands being always either covered by the sea, or wet after it has receded, and presenting numerous hollows, which are called



Loir fecit

Imp. d' Aubert & C.

PÊCHEURS DU MONT S^t MICHEL

of a belt, the females wear two or three cockle nets round their waists, and both sexes wear a *devantère* fastened to their heads, and falling back upon the shoulders. This folds, and is shaped exactly like the mantle of *Louis XI*, and the rest of the costume corresponds in character with that of the same individual. In the winter season, the dress is completed by a kind of bonnet, which only wants two or three leaden medals or shells, to recall to our memory the peculiar head dress in which that strange and inconsistent monarch so often appeared at *Plessis-les-Tours*.

The natives have a great resemblance to the *lazzaroni* of *Naples* in their manners and physiognomy. They readily offer themselves as guides over the *grèves*, and it is to this class of inhabitants that we principally owe the thousand and one tales of the destructive quicksands.

As they have no fresh water on the

by the inhabitants *guintres*, in which the water is left, and which the population has frequent occasion to traverse, not only the fishing population, but many well dressed people go without shoes and stockings very commonly.

island and only two brackish springs, the inhabitants are compelled to drink either rain water or that which is brought from *Moidrey*.

The prevailing diseases of the place seem to be phthisis, asthma, dysentery, and inflammatory complaints in general, the natural consequences of their mode of living and their locality. Their habit of making soup of brackish water and drinking cider, subjects them to dysenteries and other gastric ailments, and the elevated situation, so near the sea and unprotected from the north and north-east winds, renders them liable to the complaints incident to those who inhabit such positions.

Tourists remaining here, even for a short time, should be careful not to expose themselves too much to the keen air, until first somewhat accustomed to it in their houses, — especially in the morning and evening; but the influence of climate on the human constitution is now so well and generally understood, that it would be superfluous to enlarge on the subject, particularly as we conceive it improbable, that any one, whom these observations may reach, will ever volunteer a continuance of many

days in such exilement, notwithstanding the temptations of a beautiful and extensive view, comprehending the coasts of Normandy and Brittany, the road of *Cancale*, and the towns of *Avranches*, *Dol* and *Pontorson*, with the vast sands of the *grève*, which consist of from eight to nine square leagues of surface, on one side, and the open sea on the other.

The south and eastern sides of it only are inhabited: there are a small ancient parochial church, some houses which form a steep narrow crooked street (on the ascending road to the *château*), which rise above the roofs of the lower village, of wretched and dirty hovels in the midst of a corresponding *nastiness*, which is indescribable and disgraceful.

There are a few small gardens of imported earth, in which the fig-tree, the almond and the medlar thrive; but there is little of any other kind of fruit and scarcely any kitchen vegetable. The food of the *Montois*¹ principally consists of cockles and mutton which is considered delicately fla-

¹ The inhabitants of *Mont Saint-Michel* are called *Montois*.

voured from the qualities of the grass on the margins of the *grève*, upon which it is *fed*, — but not fattened.

It now only remains to add a short statement respecting the present state of the castle and abbey; to furnish which with accuracy we made a second visit, and that in winter, when determination of purpose alone could have led us to encounter five or six miles of road almost impassable for a carriage.

We reached it however, and threaded our way up the higher village street. The first objects of curiosity, on arriving at the walls and portcullis of the fortress, are the two pieces of cannon, taken from the English, and the house of *madame Duguesclin*, which is now the *auberge* of the dirty village.

The stranger will be fortunate if he views the castle, the abbey, and all the objects of his visit, under the guidance of the *abbé Lecourt*, the almoner of the place, as the author did, by means of an introductory letter, previously obtained from a friend of that clergyman.

The entrance, which is one hundred and forty feet above the level of the *grève*,

and reached by a succession of steps, is of most remarkable construction: it consists of a pair of turrets of exquisite workmanship, said to represent two pieces of ordnance placed upright. Between the turrets, there is an arched gateway, under which the visitor ascends by a broad granite staircase (lighted by two windows, one over the door and the other in the roof), which prepares him to expect many succeeding objects of admiration in the interior.

Opposite the portico, in the vestibule, is a large gothic chimney of the 15th century, corresponding with those seen in the castle guard rooms.

This ante-room is now used for the same purpose as formerly, and here strangers, on entering the castle, are disarmed even of a walking stick.

At the further end, on the left hand, is a door, and on the right another, but much smaller, near to which is a narrow unroofed stone staircase, which conducts to the keepers' rooms. After entering the corridor — at the top of these steps — the ancient refectory of the monks is entered, which is strikingly grand, though its style

is a mixture of the Roman and Gothic, without any elaborate ornaments.

This noble room was originally one hundred and fifty feet long, and thirty feet high. — It is now divided into two rooms (one over the other, each fifteen feet high), which are filled with weavers' looms, at which the prisoners work: the walls are *daubed over with white wash*, which, however suitable to its present use and appearance as a manufactory, is wofully repulsive to antiquarian taste, and sadly incongruous with the beautifully groined arches overhead.

The ancient dormitory is now filled with beds for the prisoners, and has nothing very remarkable in its actual character, but to the imagination it presents a strange contrast between its former and existing uses.

We were next conducted to the *Salle des Chevaliers*, or Knights' Hall, built in the commencement of the 12th century, than which there probably is not a piece of architecture in France more complete and admirable. It is of the primitive Gothic of the 11th century. Four rows of columns with capitals ornamented with *trèfles*, without any grotesque figures, support its

beautiful roof, which is divided into numerous compartments by regular and projecting groinings : a more complete or better preserved specimen of this kind of architecture can scarcely be imagined. This noble hall is also *white washed*, and converted into a linen cloth manufactory; — and it is a very singular sight to see two or three men seated in the gothic chimneys in which the mailed warriors of old sat — perhaps sword in hand — spinning cotton for the loom ; Jupiter with a distaff !

The cloister immediately over the Knights' Hall, has already been described¹.

The *Basilique* is, for its antiquity, particularly deserving of notice by the scientific traveller. In the choir of the *Basilique* or chapel of the castle — now undergoing a thorough repair, — there are still to be seen some oil paintings, full length figures of *Saint Louis*, *Saint Bénédict*, *Sainte Thérèse* and *Sainte Hélène*, but very much defaced, and as mere paintings, execrable : there are also a few almost worn out frescoes upon the wall ; one however is perfect, —

¹ See p. 42.

the genealogical tree from David to Jesus-Christ. Some painted carvings represent the expulsion from Paradise, the resurrection, the marriage of Joseph, and Saint Michael killing the dragon'. — All the figures are rudely and grotesquely formed; — but the *basilique* itself is beautiful in its architectural form and design, and calculated to elevate the imagination of the mind and the feelings of the heart to Him who, though 'he dwelleth not in temples made with hands', and saith 'what house will ye build me?' — has been worshipped here.

On the north side of the *Basilique* is what was the *Billiard-room* of the monks, — about forty feet long and twenty-one broad. It is now used as a kitchen, and the ancient *Basilique* is the modern refectory.

The '*Souterrains des gros Piliers*' — a misnomer, for these vaulted rooms are three hundred feet above the *grève*, — are based on the rock, and contain within them a great number of massive pillars, more than five feet in diameter, which bear up the colossal choir.

The staircase of the belfry is easily as-

' *Apocalypse*, chap. 12, vers. 7, 8 et 9.

cended, and on the top of the choir is a platform of lead. — Fifty feet above is the '*Promenade des Petits Fous*', and twenty-five or thirty feet still higher is the '*Promenade des Grands Fous*', signifying by their names, the relative degrees of insanity in those who choose them for their walk. Eighteen or twenty feet higher still, is the house of the signal officer, and on the summit of all is the telegraph itself. — These several and graduated elevations give an aggregate height of three hundred and seventy-eight feet from the sands to the platform of the telegraph.

The visiter now descends and enters the vestibule or corridor below the church, and contiguous to the *Salle des Chevaliers*. — Opposite to a small window in this vestibule are some vaults, at the farther end of which is said to have been an altar where the monks prayed for departed souls. This is the most beautiful cave conceivable, and, if a place for study ought to be secluded from all distracting influences, whether of sight or sound, here was a place for undisturbed meditation.

A little lower is a long dark gallery, in the middle of which is an entrance to the

old cemetery, which is now filled with wood for fuel.

At the southern extremity of this gallery is the dungeon vault (reached by turning to the left), which was formerly a place of imprisonment for the monks; but now the wheel and cable, used for raising up goods from below, are kept in it. The diameter of the wheel is about eighteen feet, and four men can turn it on the tread mill principle, — the only difference being in the mode of applying the power: they move in the interior circumference (which is ribbed with boards to give a sure step, and *point d'appui* to their feet), four abreast, and precisely as the turnspit dog performs his work.

A road from the sands, by the barracks, winding round the rock, immediately above the lowest part of the town, is in progress of formation, by which vehicles will be brought so near the castle as to be unladen with a great saving of labour.

A short flight of steps, near the cave last mentioned, conducts to a small passage from which a door opens into the ruins of the *Hôtellerie*, through which the abbots' apartments are reached by a gallery

that also leads to the chapel. Retracing his steps to the first subterranean anteroom, and opening another door, the visiter enters a large apartment with arches and columns of the 11th century, where the prisoners now work at the loom.

After traversing another room, at the extremity of this hall, a cave is reached, not entirely dark, in which the cage was formerly placed, and beyond it are those abysses of horror (now filled up) called *Oubliettes*.

The traveller returning, descends into a subterranean gallery, with arches and columns, also of the 11th century, which conducts to the darkest and the deepest dungeons of the castle, — and to the mazy passages of the *Oubliettes*.

To see the prison called *la Trappe*, the grand staircase (*Saut Gauthier*) must be descended. This cell is entered by a trap door, thro' which the descent is made by a rope ladder: but we understand that it is not so terrible as its entrance would lead one to suppose, for it is well lighted, and fronts the south.

The dungeons near this are called *Doubles-Grilles*, because the windows are grated on

both sides, — these vaults have more regular architectural style about them than any of the others, but they have been spoiled by being white washed.

All these excavations, with their passages, arches and pillars, are of a rich glowing colour not easily described, yet producing when seen, a powerful effect upon the mind.

At the base of the church, on the side near the large cistern, there was formerly a burial ground, used for the lay brethren of the abbey, and their children.

There are many other parts worthy of notice in the interior of the castle, and among them the *Salle du Gouvernement* over the entrance hall, — and the *Salle de Réception*, which is wainscoted from top to bottom with planks carved to resemble leaves of parchment folded over each other.

After having completed the survey of the castle, there is nothing else to admire; the village church is a wretched looking building, and the interior is almost as miserable as the outside.

In a recess opposite the door is the rudely sculptured figure of a decapitated monk, which we are informed is comme-

morative of an abbot of the monastery, who lost his head during the barbarities of the revolution.

There is a full sized crucifix, well carved in wood, which formerly belonged to the abbey.

But the most striking and amusing object is a groupe (also in wood¹) representing *Saint Michel*, clothed and armed like a Grecian hero about to pierce the 'old serpent' with his spear : Satan is lying prostrate, with his head — which is ornamented with horns and long ears — hanging downwards, whilst his feet and tail are projecting upwards : the celestial warrior is standing upon the chest of the demoniacal figure, whose blood red eyes glare upon him in impotent rage.

To make the tour of the island ; — immediately after leaving the outer gate we move to the right, and passing the barracks, turn short round a projecting rock, upon the top of which stand the ruins of a mill, formerly used by the Benedictine monks for grinding their corn ; — after turning this rock, another immediately pre-

¹ Carved by a prisoner in the castle.

sents itself, upon which is a church, affirmed by the local *ciceroni* to be that first erected by *Saint Aubert*; but this can not be, for his was round and the existing one is square; — it was a church dedicated to that saint.

This is a very plain, rude, and small building, partly cut out of the rock from which it rises, and only rendered interesting from the tradition attached to it, and its curious locality.

On the north side is the impression of a child's foot said to be that of *Bain*¹. We particularly observed this; and certainly the resemblance is so great that we can well imagine it to have been the footstep of a child from ten to twelve years of age, impressed when the materials of the rock were soft and plastic.

From the north side is a magnificent view of that portion of the abbey above, which, from its singularity, is called *la Merveille*, but it is not the building alone which is wondrous, for it is astonishing to see growing upon the side of the scarped rock a variety of flowers in the face of the

¹ See p. 13.



Imp. d'Aubert & Cie

LA TOUR DU GUET .

north winds, from which there is nothing to protect them, — and here, if any of the ancient forest of *Scygy* remains, it is traceable in the old stunted trees which are still living.

TOUR DU GUET.

This tower is situated near the steps ascending to the ramparts, and should not be passed by, without attention.

It was raised higher than the other towers of the fortifications, in order that, as the name expresses, it might be a place for observation; and for this purpose a sentinel was placed there to give timely notice of the approach of friends or foes.

It was erected at the commencement of the 15th century by *Robert Jolivet*, when he built the defensive walls of the town.

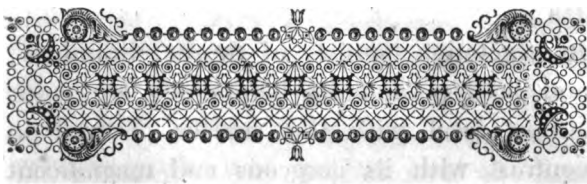
It has been conjectured by some travellers, who have visited the place and

hazarded superficial remarks , that this was the observatory of *madame Duguesclin*, — who was so celebrated for her astrological attainments , that she acquired the name of *Tiphaine , la Fée*¹, — when she composed her *MS.* , which is now preserved in the library of *Avranches* , n° 14 of the catalogue.

But as this lady lived in the early part of the 14th century, and the tower was not built until the succeeding one, the above supposition fails.—If she *had* an observatory, it was more probably the high narrow tower adjoining the *Merveille*, which overtops almost every other portion of the building.

¹ A *fée*, or fairy, is a person, according to popular superstition, supposed to possess a knowledge of coming events by acquaintance with the influences of the heavenly bodies on the occurrences of human life.





MONT TOMBELÈNE.

THE history of this rugged and uninhabited rock having been almost entirely involved in that of *Mont Saint-Michel*, little more need be said about it.

Dreary and desolate, as it appears, on a near approach it is a striking object, standing as it were in a still and lonely lake.

Its vegetation consists of thorns, brambles, and nettles, and its habitations are ruins almost level with the surface. Viewed in contrast with its gorgeous and magnificent neighbour, its nakedness and silent isolation are the more remarkable.

Though this diminutive island occupies a larger area than the other, is less elevated (not being more than one hundred and twenty feet above the level of the sands), and consequently much more convenient for buildings, yet, either from the natural desire of man to encounter and overcome difficulties, or from its more impregnable character, *Mont Saint-Michel* was selected, in the feudal times, as the site of a fortress in preference to *Tombelène*.

The etymology of this name is as difficult to ascertain as that of the sister island, and it is useless to form conjectures upon so unprofitable a subject¹.

It is situated on the same grève with

¹ *Robert Cenalis*, 52nd bishop of *Avranches*, in 1532, a learned and pious prelate, gave this rock the name of *Tumbuluna* — the little tomb; — but why he should call it so, we do not know. Though not so pyramidical, it is larger than *Mont Saint-Michel*.

Mont Saint-Michel, and once stood in the midst of the same forest. We (but principally from memory) present here, as a curious specimen of the bad taste and bombastic confusion of metaphors in which some of the monks of old indulged, the following legendary description of the submersion of the woody plain of *Sissy* or *Scygy*.

“*Saint Michel*, unable to banish Satan from the world, wished to place the sea between him and the two rocks, and for this purpose he ordered it to approach and surround them with its waters. The mandate was not immediately obeyed, but from that moment, fearful signs appeared in the air; globes of fire rushed through the dark shades of night; groanings and lamentations, which seemed to come from the bowels of the earth, were heard; the wind howled through the forest trees; the rains fell and all nature seemed to await some great crisis.

” These alarming prognostications continued till the month of March, when the rivers *Selune*, *Sée*, and *Couesnon* simultaneously overflowed their willow bordered banks, carrying shepherds, herds, and pastures with

them into the sea. The ocean sympathised : driven by a boisterous north-east wind, it burst through its banks and forced a way into the hollows ; uprooted the forest ; levelled the surface ; filled the valleys ; created new land ; defaced old ; rose like a water spout, in one place ; and glided along the earth like a serpent, in another ; the angels pushed it forward with their hands ; it mounted ; it reared like a horse under the lash of the whip ; its white mane floated in the air as high as the clouds. The two mounts were not protected from its wrath. The waves clung to their sides as the wasp does to the branch of the flowering almond : the waters stripped them of their verdure, of their fresh covering of broom mingled with wild roses ; tore from their heads their plumes of vervain ; they eat the flesh to the bone ; and when peace was again restored to the country , when the calm — the first fruit of the tempest — shone forth in a brilliant day, nothing was to be seen but a vast sea, in the midst of which were two black and naked rocks , such as one of them now is , and the other would be, if without its mural dress.”

The first *authentic* notice, that we find of

Mont Tombelène, bears the date of 1135', when, as we have already stated, the abbot *Bernard* built an oratory there, and a few contracted cells, to which he and some of his confraternity frequently retired for prayer and contemplation. But their devotions were not so private as they desired. The inhabitants along the shore, particularly those of *Genêts*, then without a church, wished to participate in their pious exercises, and in spite of the dangers of the sands crossed over to the mount. For fear of being surprised by the sea, they built a *calvaire* on

It appears however to have been described centuries before, under the denomination of *Monasterium ad duas Tumbas*, by which *Mont Saint-Michel*, according to the ancient titles of the abbey, appears to have been known, under *Saint Pair*, bishop of *Avranches* (about 530 or 540), at the time when, according to some historians, the first apostles of *Neustria* built the monastery, and consequently two hundred years before Saint Aubert's little church was constructed, and which, if this account be correct, was not the first that was built there.

Maximilien Raoul says, that the term *Monasterium ad duas Tumbas* undoubtedly arose from the union of the monks of the two mounts, under one director (*Saint Pair*), and with the imagination of an artist he has connected the two mounts by an avenue in the forest of *Scygy*.

their line of road to serve as a guide and refuge, but this has sunk into the sands and entirely disappeared¹. So many of the people (notwithstanding every precaution) perished on their visits to *Tombelène*, that *Robert de Thorigny*, compassionating their situation, built a church at *Genêts* in 1178, from which time *Mont Tombelène* was much less frequented².

A priory dependent upon the abbey of *Mont Saint-Michel*, was afterwards built upon *Tombelène*, and *Jordan* (the 17th abbot of the former establishment) and his monks were in the habit of assembling there, at the period when the abbey was burnt by the *Bretons*. That abbot was interred in the church of the priory, early in the 13th century³.

¹ *Blondel, Notice Historique et Topographique du Mont Saint-Michel*, page 119.

² "Indè Robertus in Angliam trajecit ob res monasterii, quibus absolutis, continuò reversus ecclesiam de *Genêts*, quam extruxerat, dedicari sollicitus fuit." *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 11, page 520.

³ "Philippus ingentem pecuniæ summam ad resarciendas ædes misit ad *Jordanem*, qui curâ singulari manum admovit operi; sed non absolvit,

Philippe-Auguste, observing that *Mont Tombelène*, if undefended, would serve the English as a place of debarkation, and for forming attacks on *Mont Saint-Michel*, had a fort built upon it, to repel the landing of their enemies.

The English have frequently had possession of this little island, and in successive periods erected edifices upon it, particularly, the strong castle which we have noticed in our account of *Mont Saint-Michel*.

In 1220, fortifications were raised upon *Tombelène*, the English took possession of those in 1273, and in 1418 built a castle in which they kept a garrison until 1450¹.

morte preventus die 6 Augusti, anno 1212. Corpus jacet pro voto ejus in prioratu de *Tombelène*, uno milliari a monte distante, à quo pendet inter arenas maris." *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 11, page 521.

¹ A drawing of this fortress has been sent from *Paris* to the archeological society of *Avranches*, where it may be seen. From the appearance it was an important place. There is also a view of it, taken about the middle of the 17th century, in a work entitled *le Voyage de France, par Merian*, 3^d vol. in-folio. We see by a marginal note, in a copy of that work at *Valognes*, that the demolition

Under *Louis XIV*, one of the seats of government was established on *Tombellène*, and the famous *Foucquet* was appointed governor of it. He constructed several fortifications and garrisoned them; after his disgrace they were rendered useless, and ten years later, by order of the king, they were totally destroyed.

The dilapidated remains of the walls of the fortifications are still to be seen, and the lower part of a tower still exists, as well as the fragment of the building, in which tradition says that *Montgomery* stamped coins for the payment of his followers in the civil wars in which he bore so distinguished a share: from this building, a passage, probably conducting to the

of this fortress was commenced in 1656, and not concluded till 1679.

The *abbé Desroches* has also given us a representation of this castle, taken as he states, from a drawing in the tower of London; but we are almost certain that so magnificent a building never stood upon *Mont Tombellène*; for, if so, the still existing original, unhewn rock, would have been, according to the apparent scale of the supposed castle, within the area of the edifice, and therefore would present a very different appearance from that of an unvelled surface of high rock in its primitive state.

interior of the ancient fortifications, is open at one end, but is blocked up in its course by superincumbent rubbish.

The chapel of *Tombelène*, dedicated to the Virgin and *Sainte Apolline*, was in existence a long time after the fortifications were destroyed; it was even kept up, until within a few years of the revolution, and, like the neighbouring isle, was the object of devotional visits.

The rock itself, like that of *Mont Saint-Michel*, is of granite, and nearly half a league nearer the sea than the latter, and therefore less accessible at the time of the flowing tides.

It was sold during the revolution, and has since that time passed through several hands, but for very trifling sums, as it is only valued for the building stone which is quarried there and taken to the adjacent coast, and for rabbits, which, without a resident keeper, it would be impossible to preserve from poachers, who can go there at low water without any difficulty; and, tho' there is a great deal of cover for hares among the privet and wild herbage growing upon the rock, and soil in which appropriate food might be raised for them, no

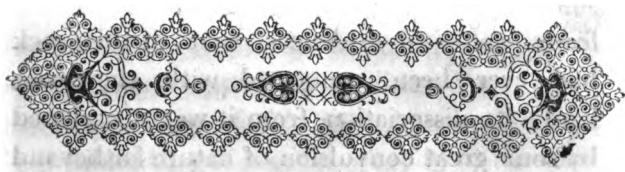
disposition to render it a *preserve* seems to be entertained. The rock was disposed of very lately in perpetuity for sixty pounds.

The stone, though of a fine grain and good colour, is so hard that very little of it is removed to the main.

A small house was built upon it, to communicate telegraphic signals, during the last war, — but at the peace it was completely levelled.

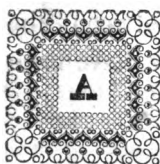
The access to this island, even at low tides, owing to the congregated waters of different rivers, which intersect the *grève*, is often so difficult, and the inducement to go there, so inconsiderable, that few strangers are tempted to cross over to it either from *Mont Saint-Michel*, to which it appears quite close, or from *Genêts*.





SAINT-MICHAEL'S MOUNT

In Cornwall.



s this has been referred to more than once in the preceding pages, the following brief account of it may be interesting.

It is very similarly situated with *Mont Saint-Michel* in Normandy, and tho' tradition says that the former once stood, like the other, in a vast forest, *D^r Berger* proves

from geological evidences, that, if this rock had ever been connected with the main land, its dissociation from it was occasioned by some great convulsion of nature far beyond the reach of tradition or historical record.

This pyramidical mass of rocks, which is 231 feet high, from the level of the sea to the platform of the chapel, is only insulated and separated at high water from the main land¹: it is connected with the town of Marazion by a causeway which is passable at low water.

This town is said to have derived its origin, and for a long time its support, from the resort of pilgrims to the sacred edifice on Saint-Michael's Mount; this resource failing at the reformation, the town decreased in consequence.

At the bottom of the Mount in digging for tin (which is said to have once constituted an article of traffic between the Phœnicians and the Britons) there have been

¹ The lofty situation of the church appears peculiar to the churches dedicated to Saint Michael; in allusion it is said, to Saint Michael's having been the highest of the heavenly host. Saint Michael's in Normandy is another confirmation of this remark.

found spear heads, battle axes, and swords of brass, wrapped up in linen.

The history of this rock in some respects resembles that of its *namesake*, in Normandy, but the archangel does not appear to have so especially protected it.

Edward the confessor, king of England, as appears from the *MS.* of *Dom Huynes*, page 186, presented to the abbot of *Mont Saint-Michel*, Saint-Michael's Mount in Cornwall, with all its buildings, castle, and appendages, as a redemption for his own soul and that of his parents'. *Bernard*, 13th

' In nomine sanctæ et individue Trinitatis, Ego Edouardus, Dei gratiâ rex Anglorum, dare volens pretium redemptionis animæ meæ, vel parentum meorum, sub consensu et testimonio bonorum virorum, tradidi Sancto Michaeli archangelo, in usum fratrum Deo serventium in eodem loco, Sanctum Michaellem qui est juxta mare, cum omnibus appendiciis, villis scilicet, castellis, agris et cæteris attinentibus. Addidi etiam totam terram *de Vennesire*, cum oppidis, villis, agris, pratis, terris cultis et incultis, et cum horum redditibus. Adjunxi quoque datis addere portum qui vocatur *Ruminella*, cum omnibus quæ ad eum pertinent: hoc est molendinis et piscatoriis, et cum omni territorio illius culto et inculto, et eorum redditibus. Si quis autem his donis conatus fuerit ponere calumpniam, anathema factus iram Dei incurrat perpetuam. *MS.* n° 80, page 28.

abbot of *Mont Saint-Michel*, built a priory upon the Mount in Cornwall, and dedicating it to Saint Michael sent twelve monks from the saint's abbey in Normandy to dwell there; that property — says the *MS.* of *Dom Huynes* — belonging to the abbey by virtue of a charter granted by Edward the confessor, was afterwards confirmed by *Robert, comte de Mortain* — who was created *comte of Cornwall* '.

' In nomine sanctæ et individuæ Trinitatis, Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Ego Robertus, Dei gratiam Moritonii comes, igne divini amoris succensus, notifico omnibus sanctæ ecclesiæ matris nostræ filiis, habens in bello Sancti Michaelis vexillum quem pro uniōne meæ salutis atque meæ conjugis, seu pro salute, prosperitate, incolumitate Guillelmi gloriosissimi regis, atque pro adipiscendo vitæ æternæ præmio, do et concedo montem Sancti Michaelis de Cornubiâ Deo et monachis ecclesiæ Sancti Michaelis de periculo maris servientibus, cum dimidiâ terræ hinc, ita solutam et quietam ac liberam ut ego tenebam ab omnibus consuetudinibus, quærellis et placidis, et constituo etiam ut ipsi monachi, concedente domino meo rege, ibidem mercatum die quintæ feriæ habeant. Postea autem, ut certissimè comperi beati Michaelis meritis monachorumque mereri suffragiis, mihi à Deo ex propria conjugis meæ filio concesso, auxi donum, ipsi beato militiæ cœlestis principi dedi et dono in Amapech tres acras terræ, Travclaboth

John, earl of Oxford, who was the only one of the Lancastrian leaders, that escaped after the battle of Barnet-field, by

videlicet, Lismanoeh, Trequavers, Carmailoc, annuente piissimo domino meo Guillelmo rege, cum Mathilda regina atque nobilibus illorum filiis, Roberto comite, Guillelmo Rufo, Henrico adhuc puero. Ita quietam ac liberam de omnibus placitis, quærelis atque forisfactis, ut de nulla re regiae justitiae monachi respondebunt, nisi de solo homicidio. Hanc autem donationem feci ego Robertus, comes Moritonii, quam concesserunt gloriosus rex Anglorum Wiellelmus atque regina et filii eorum sub testimoniis istorum.

Ego quidem Livricus, Dei dono Eascestriae episcopus, jussione et exhortatione domini nostri reverentissimi Gregorii papae regisque nostri et reginae, omniumque optimatum totius regni Angliae exhortatus, ut ecclesiam beati archangeli Michaelis de Cornubiâ, ut potè quæ officio et ministerio angelico creditur, atque comprobatur consecrari ac sacrificari, quatenus eam ab omni episcopali jure, potestate, seu subjectione liberarem atque exuerem, quod et facere totius cleri nostri consensu et hortatu non distuli. Libero igitur eam et exub ab omni episcopali dominatione, subjectione, inquietudine et omnibus illis qui illam ecclesiam suis cum beneficiis et elemosinis expecierint et visiterint, tertiam partem poenitentiarum condonamus, et, ut hoc in convulsum et immobile et etiam inviolabile finetenus permaneat, ex auctoritate Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, omnibus nostris successoribus interdiciamus ne aliquid contra hoc decretum usurpare praesumant. MS. n° 80, p. 29 et 30.

taking refuge in Wales where he joined the forces of the earl of Pembroke, and continued to brave the power of the house of York, assembled a party of soldiers and crossed from Wales to the coast of Cornwall, where he and his followers disguised themselves as pilgrims going to pay their devotions at the church of Saint Michael, by which means they gained admittance into the castle, overpowered the small garrison with which it was defended, and obtained possession of it.

Edward sent sir John Arundel to retake the Mount, but he failed in the assault, and was killed on the sands of the bay.

John Fortescue was next sent against the earl, and made an attack, which also proved unsuccessful : he laid siege to the place which lasted from the end of September to the 15th of February following, when the earl agreed to surrender on condition of receiving a pardon for himself and his followers ; but the king, considering that the pardon only extended to *life*, imprisoned him in the castle of Manns in Picardy, where he remained till the year 1485, when he came over with Richmond, and took part in the action of Bosworth field.

Perkin Warbeck, who passed himself for Richard, the younger son of Edward iv, landed (after he had taken refuge in the wilds of Ireland) with a party of followers at Whitsand-bay, — and the monks of Saint Michael admitted him into their strong hold, and favoured his cause.

He repaired the fortifications, — put the castle in a state of defence, and left his wife there while he marched with his forces to Bodmin. — She remained in the castle till after the unsuccessful termination of his enterprize.

Henry II, compassionating lady Catherine's misfortunes, sent her a pardon, and at the same time the grant of a comfortable maintenance, which she enjoyed till her death.

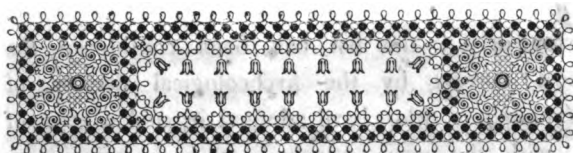
On the top of the tower, there are the remains of a moon-stone lantern, which the monks had raised for the security of the fishermen, from whom they had a tithe of fish; this, which only admits but one person to sit down in it at the same time, is called by the natives Saint-Michael's chair.

We believe that the island, now belongs to the Saint-Aubyn family, originally from *Avranchin*, who became possessors of it

about the time of the restoration of the Stuarts. The chapel has been newly fitted up in the Gothic style, — and, in the last century, the interior part of the buildings on the summit, which partakes of the twofold character of fortress and monastery, underwent repairs and alterations¹.

¹ Vide. — *Le Nouvel Atlas ou Théâtre du Monde*, par Jean Jansson, vol. 4, page 58. *National Magazine*.





APPENDIX.

NAMES OF THE KNIGHTS

WHO

Defended Mont Saint-Michel against the English

A. D. 1423.

AFTER examining all the lists to which we have had access, of the 120 knights who so bravely defended *Mont Saint-Michel* in the year 1423, we have extracted that of the historian *Dumoulin*, though from the great discrepancy amongst authors, as to the total number, and even the names themselves, there may be some

error in it : this list has been considered the most correct by the Archeological Society of *Avranches*, who have adopted it, and a copy of it with the arms attached to each name now hangs up in their museum. The names and arms of the knights were first painted on the walls of the church of *Mont Saint-Michel*, but in the course of time were so defaced that several of them could not be decyphered by *Dom Huynes*, who could only make out 99, and consequently only gave that number in his *MS.*

Masseville names. 100

M. Blondel. 116

Goube. 120

Cousin. 119

We shall not presume to give any opinion on the relative accuracies of the different lists, but we will state one instance of the nature of those incongruities.

In *Dumoulin's* catalogue which preceded that of *Dom Huynes*, are the following names :

Jean Hamon,

Colibeaux,

and Grainville.

which do not appear in that of *Cousin*; and in that of the latter are

C. Hé,

G. de Hellequilly,

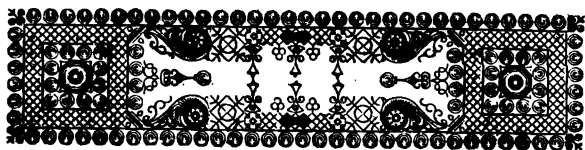
and Nel

which do not appear in that according to *Dumoulin.*

LIST.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Le Sr d'Estouteville , | 31. Le Sr d'Aussays. |
| capitaine. | 32. Le Sr de Verdun. |
| 2. Le Sr Paisnel. | 33. Le Sr G. d'Esquilly. |
| 3. Charles Hamon. | 34. Le Sr de la Haye - |
| 4. Jean Hamon. | d'Aronde. |
| 5. Le Sr Colibeaux. | 35. Le Sr A. Pigace. |
| 6. Jean de Criquebeuf. | 36. Le Sr L. de Cantilly. |
| 7. Le Sr de Criqui. | 37. Le Sr R. du Homme. |
| 8. Le Sr de Guimené. | 38. Le Sr de Grainville. |
| 9. Le Sr de la Hunaudaie. | 39. Le Sr de Quintin. |
| 10. Le Sr de Thorigny. | 40. Le Sr de Veir. |
| 11. C. de Bordeaux. | 41. Le Sr de la Haye-Hue. |
| 12. Le Sr de la Hire. | 42. Le Sr T. de Nossye. |
| 13. Le Sr André de la Haye- | 43. Le Sr T. de la Brayeuse. |
| du-Puits. | 44. Le Sr de Rouencestre. |
| 14. C. de Manneville. | 45. Le Sr de Bricqueville. |
| 15. Le Sr des Biarts. | 46. Le Sr Jean d'Espas. |
| 16. Le Sr de Folligny. | 47. Le Sr G. Prestel. |
| 17. Le Sr de la Luzerne. | 48. Le Sr G. de Cuës. |
| 18. Le Sr J. Pigace. | 49. Le Sr G. de la Motte. |
| 19. Le Bâtard d'Aubosc. | 50. Le Sr T. de la Motte. |
| 20. Le Sr C. de Brequeville. | 51. Le Sr de Ploom. |
| 21. Le Sr R. Roussel. | 52. Le Sr P. Le Gris. |
| 22. Le Sr de Coulombières. | 53. Le Sr T. de la Paluelle. |
| 23. Le Sr P. du Gripel. | 54. Le Sr Jean Guiton. |
| 24. Le Sr Robert de Beau- | 55. Le Sr Baron de Cou- |
| voir. | lonces. |
| 25. Le Sr de Moyon. | 56. Le Sr de Nautrech. |
| 26. Le Sr P. de Tournemine. | 57. Le Sr Henri de Gripel. |
| 27. Le Sr J. de Carrouges. | 58. Le Sr François Hamon. |
| 28. Le Sr T. Pirou. | 59. Le Sr F. du Merle. |
| 29. Le Sr T. de Moncair. | 60. Le Sr Ch. de Fonteny. |
| 30. Le Sr de Vair. | 61. Le Sr G. Leviconte. |

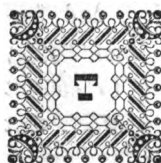
62. Le Sr S. de Tournebus.
63. Le Sr T. Houël.
64. Le Sr H. Thesard.
65. Le Sr F. Heraut.
66. Le Sr T. de la Motte.
67. Le Bâtard Pigace.
68. Le Sr P. Deslongnes.
69. Le Sr J. Deslongnes.
70. Le Sr de Folligny.
71. Le Sr aux Espauls.
72. Le Sr Baron de Crou-beuf.
73. Le Sr T. Benoist.
74. Le Sr J. Benoist.
75. Le Sr Guillaume Benoist.
76. Le Sr Pierre de Viette.
77. Le Sr Robert de Brézé.
78. Le Sr Thomas Hartel.
79. Le Sr Richard de Clin-champ.
80. Le Sr Robert de Bric-queville.
81. Le Sr Charles des Mons-tiers.
82. Le Sr d'Espas.
83. Le Sr Etienne Auber.
84. Le Sr F. de Marcillé.
85. Le Sr Etienne d'Orge-val.
86. Le Sr Jean Massire.
87. Le Sr de la Maire.
88. Le Sr Robert de Nautret.
89. Le Sr P. Baçon.
90. Le Sr du Cler.
91. Le Bâtard de Thorigny.
92. Le Sr Jean de la Cham-pagne.
93. Le Sr de Bruille.
94. Le Sr P. du Moulin.
95. Le Sr T. du Gouhier.
96. Le Sr R. de Regnières.
97. Le Sr Robert Lambart.
98. Le Sr R. de Bailleul.
99. Le Sr M. le Bences.
100. Le Sr P. d'Ausseys.
101. Le Sr S. Thomas Gue-rin.
102. Le Sr Guillaume de Bourquenobles.
103. Le Sr Yves le Prieur Vague de Mer.
104. Le Sr G. de la Mare.
105. Le Sr Henri Millard.
106. Le Sr F. Lambard.
107. Le Sr B. des Monts.
108. Le Sr de Crullé.
109. Le Sr Bastard de Cam-brey.
110. Le Sr P. Allard.
111. Le Sr Robert du Homme.
112. Le Sr de S. Germain.
113. Le Sr J. Dravart.
114. Le Sr Guillaume Artur.
115. Le Sr J. le Carpentier.
116. Le Sr J. de Pontfoul.
117. Le Sr G. de Semilly.
118. Le Sr R. de Semilly.
119. Le Sr R. de la Motte-Vigor.
120. Le Sr Jean le Brun.



NOMENCLATURE OF THE MSS.

In the Library at Avranches,

With the number of the volumes and
their form.



HE learned are much indebted to *M. Eugène Castillon de Saint-Victor*,—a gentleman of great literary attainments and an elegant poet—for the excellent catalogue of the books in the library at *Avranches*: he commenced his labours in the year 1819 and concluded them in 1821.

When the monasteries were suppressed, their

libraries were placed by the government in the chief towns of their respective arrondissemens. During the civil disturbances which have agitated France, they were very much neglected, and many valuable works were lost : *M. de Saint-Victor*, on comparing the catalogue of the books of the chapter of *Avranches* (existing in 1789) with his own, found that three fourths of them had disappeared.

Though the college in which the library is placed was commenced in 1781 and finished in 1798, when the books were transferred to it, there was no regular catalogue of them arranged until that of *M. de Saint-Victor* in 1821.

The splendid library of *Mont Saint-Michel* (constituting half of the present library of *Avranches*), with those of the abbeys of *Luserne* and *Montmorel* and the chapter of *Avranches*, after the loss and destruction of many volumes, were collected and arranged, and have formed the basis of the present library of *Avranches*, which contains about 10,000 volumes, and is one of the most voluminous and valuable in Normandy, and frequently visited by literary persons from Paris, and even foreign countries, desiring to consult the typographical rarities and valuable MSS. that it contains.

Every one knows that we are indebted to the Roman-Catholics for the preservation of the learned treasures of Rome and Athens; and that, when the soldier was firing cities, and the flames were

devouring the most valuable libraries, the monks were copying the works of Virgil and Cicero in their cloisters.

Cassiodore, who founded the monastery of *Viviers* in Calabria, in the 6th century, employed his monks in transcribing books.

Loup, the abbot of *Ferrières*, had the works of Suetonius, Sallust, Titus-Livius and Cicero, transcribed in the 9th century.

In the 10th century the abbey of *Fleury* possessed Cicero's treatise *de Republica*, and in the 11th century all the convents were distinguished for their industry in taking copies of *MSS.* In that of *Saint Martin*—near *Tournai*—twelve monks were almost exclusively occupied in writing out the works of ancient and modern authors.

The 12th century was still more remarkable for the desire to preserve the writings of the ancients.

In the 13th century, the abbey of Glastonbury in England possessed 400 vols in *MSS.* amongst which were the works of Livy, Sallust, and Virgil.

In the 14th century the monastery of Saint-Gall had preserved an entire copy of Quintilian.

The abbey of *Mont Saint-Michel*, from its foundation to the discovery of printing, in the middle of the 15th century, has not been less distinguished than other monasteries for its transcription and preservation of ancient *MSS.*

In the 8th and 9th centuries the monks of *Saint*

Aubert brought some *MSS.* from Naples and other parts of Italy, and composed several works themselves.

In the 10th century the abbot *Mainard I* kept his monks constantly employed with their pens.

In the 11th century the abbot *Suppon* brought a great quantity of precious *MSS.* with him, from Italy, and formed a very considerable library.

In the 12th century *Robert du Mont* preserved the *chefs-d'œuvre* of antiquity, and he was himself the author of a prodigious number of scientific works : — in the following century the particular occupation of his successors was the transcribing of books.

In the 14th century *Pierre le Roy* enriched this library with several learned works, and he composed many himself. At that period also a great number of learned works was presented by different benefactors to the monks of *Mont Saint-Michel*. *Cherus* and *Thomas de Vincheleys* made, each, a present of a numerous stored library; — and in the 13th century *Gillain de Caen*, bishop of *Coutances*, presented to the chapter of *Avranches* his extensive library. Even in the latter part of the 15th century, after the art of printing was discovered, the monks still continued their penmanship.

A perusal of the subjoined catalogue will occasion surprise, both as to the number and merit of the works which it furnishes. — Yet it contains

but a part of those of which the library once consisted : during the revolution many volumes were recklessly destroyed : — many valuable volumes however were saved from destruction and disposed of to the monks of *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, for publication and distribution in other countries.

THÉOLOGIE.

Écriture Sainte.

TEXTES ET VERSIONS DE LA BIBLE.

Biblia sacra. MS. n° 40, 1 vol. in-4°.

Biblia sacra. MS. — Circiter in duodecimo seculo.

HISTOIRES ABRÉGÉES ET FIGURES DE LA BIBLE.

Sanctus Beda, de Tabernaculo. MS. n° 119, 1 vol. in-4°.

INTERPRÈTES DES LIVRES SÉPARÉS DE L'ANCIEN TESTAMENT.

Summa Magistri Sententiarum. MS. n° 82, 1 vol. in-folio.

Magister Sententiarum. MS. n° 90, 1 vol. in-folio.

Magister Sententiarum in psalmos; Pars prior Abelardi; Commentaria in Exameron; Varia selecta. MS. n° 176, 1 vol. in-folio.

Magister Sententiarum in Psalmos, et Glossarium in Canticum Canticorum. MS. 1 vol. in 4°.

Ricardi Victoris varia Opera. *MS.* n° 139, 1 vol. in-folio.

S. Beda in Danielelem, Reges et Genesim. *MS.* n° 19, 1 vol. in-folio.

Regula Sancti Benedicti. *MS.* n° 58, 1 v. in-4°.

Rabanus in librum Regum et Machabæorum. *MS.* n° 148, 1 vol. in-folio.

Rabani Expositio in Judith et Esther. *MS.* n° 102, 1 vol. in-folio.

Rabanus in Jeremiam. *MS.* n° 74, 1 vol. in-folio.

Radulphi Flaviacensis in Leviticum. *MS.* n° 62, 1 vol. in-folio.

Glossa in Leviticum, Numerum et Deuteronomium. *MS.* n° 133, 1 vol. in-folio.

Glossa in Ezechielem. *MS.* n° 108, 1 vol. in-folio.

Glossarium in Josue et Judith. *MS.* n° 85, 1 vol. in-f°.

Glossarium in Paralipomena, Exod, Thobiam et Judith. *MS.* n° 101, 1 vol. in-folio.

Glossarium in Tobiam, Judith, Ruth, Esther et Esdram. *MS.* n° 96, 1 vol. in-4°.

Glossa in librum Regum. *MS.* n° 149, 1 v. in-f°.

Glossa in vetus Testamentum, in Genesim et Exod. *MS.* n° 15, 1 vol. in-folio.

Sancti Augustini in Psalmos, à psalmo primo ad quinquagesimum, Pars prima. *MS.* n° 31, 1 v. in-f°.

Sancti Augustini Expositio in Psalmos. *MS.* n° 118, 1 vol. in-4°.

Speculum Sancti Augustini tum veteris quàm novi Testamenti et alia non edita. *MS.* n° 173, 1 v. in-4°.

Beati Augustini Quæstiones in Genesim. *MS.* n° 188, 1 vol. in-folio.

Apologeticus Pamphili Martyris pro Origene; Ruffinus de Corruptione Librorum Origenis, et alia Opera. *MS.* n° 104, 1 vol. in-folio.

Explanatio Origenis in Psalmos 106 et 107, et in Job libri III. *MS.* n° 20, 1 vol. in-folio.

S. Gregorii Magni Libri xvi in Job. MS. n° 75, 1 vol. in-folio.

Beati Gregorii Magni in Ezechielem Expositio. MS. n° 125, 1 vol. in-folio.

Glossa D. Gregorii in Job et in Mathæum. MS. n° 132, 1 vol. in-folio.

S. Gregorii Magni in Job Libri 18. MS. n° 112, 1 vol. in-folio.

Commentaria in S. Marci et S. Mathæi Evangelium. MS. n° 3, 1 vol. in-folio. — Ce MS. est très-beau et très-bien conservé.

Lectiones de sacra Scriptura excerptæ et Vita Sanctorum in nocturnis. MS. n° 187, 1 vol. in-folio.

In duos Libros Machabæorum Commentaria. MS. n° 51, 1 vol. in-folio.

Angelomi monachi Commentaria seu Stromata in quatuor Libros Regum. MS. n° 5, 1 vol. in-folio.

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TABLE.

PRÉFACE.	pages v
Historical Account of <i>Mont Saint-Michel</i>	1
<i>Mont Tombelène</i>	157
Saint-Michael's Mount in Cornwall.	167
Names of the Knights who defended <i>Mont Saint-Michel</i> against the English A. D. 1423.	175
Catalogue of the <i>MSS.</i> in the Library at <i>Auranches</i>	179



ERRATA.

- Page 3, Myrtha, read : Mythra.*
- P. 6, accomodated — accommodated.*
- P. 34, beseiging — besieging.*
- P. 111, galant — gallant.*
- P. 123, arested — arrested.*
- P. 128, meadwos — meadows.*
- P. 139, indipensable — indispensable.*
- P. 144, accuracy — accuracy.*

